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MIDNIGHT MEANS MURDER!
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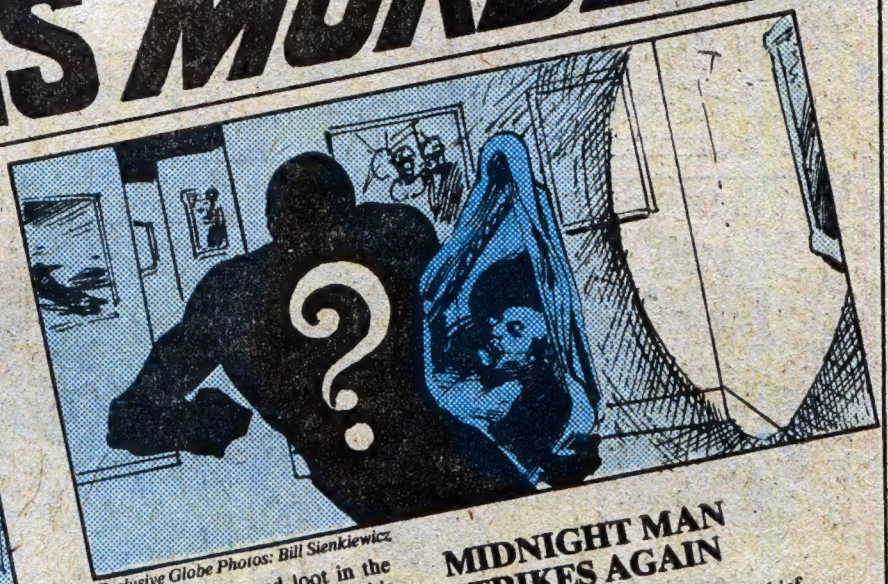
Stan Lee PRESENTS:

MOON KNIGHT!™

DAILY BUGLE

VOL. 59 NO. 52 — NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1980 — PRICE 25¢

MIDNIGHT MEANS *MURDER*



Exclusive Globe Photos: Bill Sienkiewicz

ANOTHER LUNA NIGHT

By Staff Writer Doug Moench

The Third National Bank was robbed last night, but only up to a point.

That point was roughly three steps beyond the entrance of the defiled bank, located at the southeast corner of Madison Avenue and 89th Street, where the two armed desperadoes were abruptly assailed by a silver and black hurricane named Moon Knight.

As far as the costumed vigilante is concerned, the hurricane analogy is more than apt. According to the sole eyewitness, the admittedly groggy night watchman (who had been struck on the head by one of the would-be thieves), "The guy just seemed to come out of the sky like some kind of silver ghost, and then the two robbers were on the pavement. I never seen nothing like it before." As for the battered thugs (whose names are being withheld pending further investigation), one supposes they never knew what hit them. Long before the police arrived the Moon Knight had vanished, leaving behind only his silver crescent-dart "calling card" — with the foiled thieves and recovered loot in the care of the night watchman. When this writer last checked the blotter, the two new prisoners were still peacefully dreaming of sweet green and all it can buy. A rude awakening of striped shadows and iron bars awaits them.

And speaking of shadows, Manhattanites have never been more spooked by them, despite the relentless presence of the Moon Knight, if not the police. This was the 23rd night of New York's latest uninterrupted crime wave. And although Moon Knight has figured prominently (and spectacularly) in 19 of the past 23 nights, the jet and silver whirlwind has yet to tangle with the most celebrated miscreant currently about town — he who has been dubbed "the Midnight Man," a thief with taste and the gall to appease it nightly in all the better parts of an outraged town. Even a hurricane, it seems, cannot strike everywhere. Even so, nor can one turn back the tide of the inevitable. Like the moon and midnight, these two mysterious men go together. And sooner or later, one suspects walking through the plastered shadows of this nighted city, their paths are destined to cross. And clash.

It is only a matter of time, measured by the darkness between midnights.

MIDNIGHT MAN STRIKES AGAIN

(CNB-5/3) The connoisseur art thief who has been called "the Midnight Man" struck again last night, burgling a rare Monet oil painting from the Ramadam Art Gallery on Fifth Ave. near 59th Street. The thief, whose stolen prizes range from paintings and original manuscripts to priceless collectibles and who has continued his Jack the Ripper-like practice of taunting the police by mail, is still at large after 23 consecutive nights of successful theft. The latest note to the police (reproduced in full on page 3) defies anyone, "including that gaudy buffoon Moon Knight," to stop him, "now that I've amply demonstrated that the police are no match for my cunning or finesse."

Asked to comment on the latest theft, Police Chief Edward X. Delaney had only this to say: "Although the Midnigh Man hasn't killed anybody yet, it' happen sooner or later, mark my word As far as I and my men are concerne until he's caught midnight around h means murder."

(continued on page 27)

DOUG MO WRITER
BILL SIEN ARTIST
JOE ROSEN LETTERER
BOB SHAREN COLORIST
DENNY O'NEIL EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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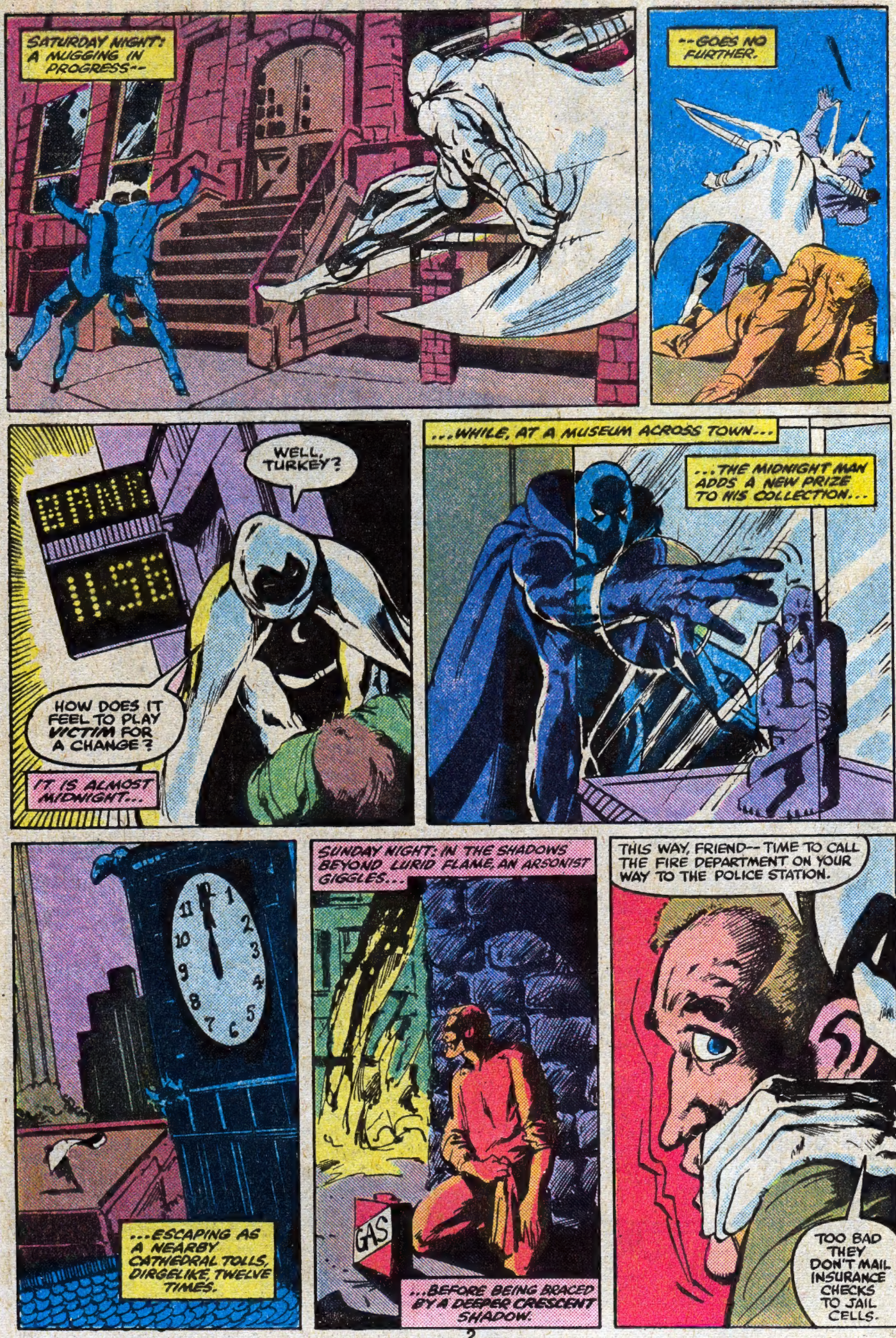
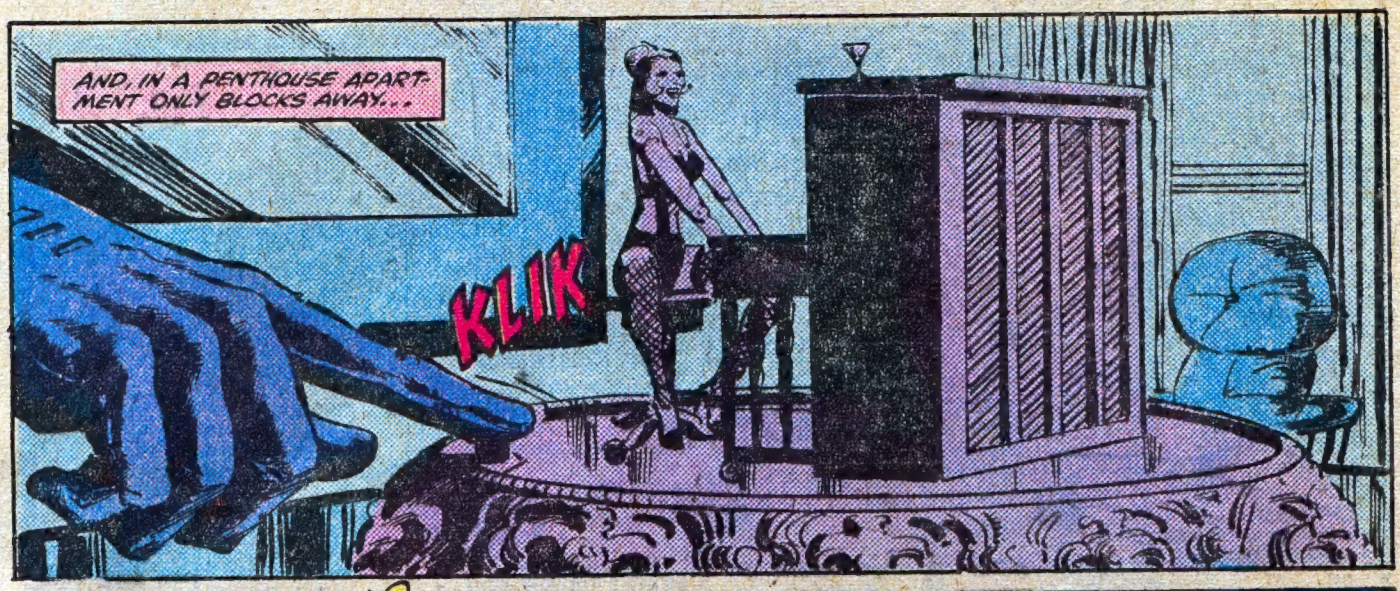
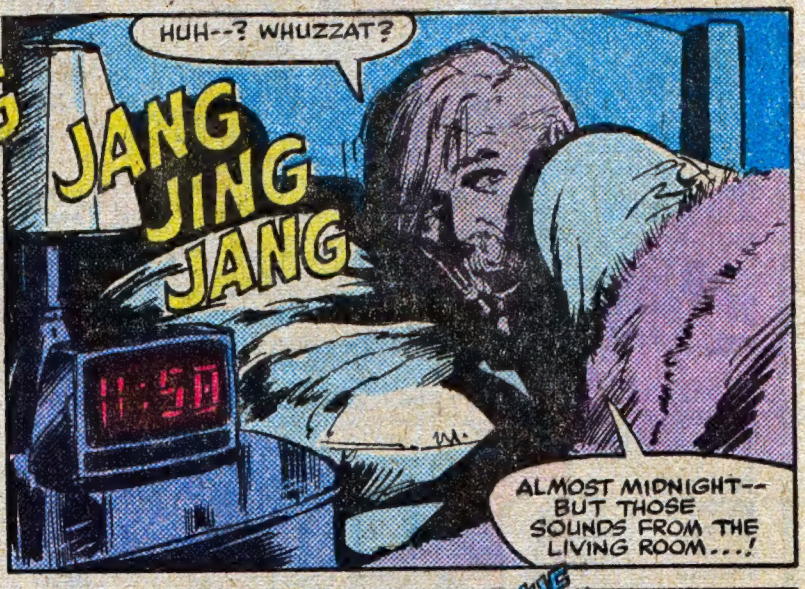

SATURDAY NIGHT: A MUGGING IN PROGRESS--
--GOES NO FURTHER.
WELL, TURKEY?
11:56
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO PLAY VICTIM FOR A CHANGE?
IT IS ALMOST MIDNIGHT...
...WHILE, AT A MUSEUM ACROSS TOWN...
...THE MIDNIGHT MAN ADDS A NEW PRIZE TO HIS COLLECTION...
...ESCAPING AS A NEARBY CATHEDRAL TOLLS, DIRGELIKE, TWELVE TIMES.
SUNDAY NIGHT: IN THE SHADOWS BEYOND LURID FLAME, AN ARSONIST GIGGLES...
GAS
...BEFORE BEING BRACED BY A DEEPER CRESCENT SHADOW.
THIS WAY, FRIEND-- TIME TO CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT ON YOUR WAY TO THE POLICE STATION.
TOO BAD THEY DON'T MAIL INSURANCE CHECKS TO JAIL CELLS.


AND, IN A PENTHOUSE APARTMENT ONLY BLOCKS AWAY...
KLIK

JANG JING JANG
AH... DELIGHTFUL.


HUH--? WHUZZAT?
JANG JING JANG
11:50
ALMOST MIDNIGHT-- BUT THOSE SOUNDS FROM THE LIVING ROOM...!

THE WINDOW'S OPEN--! AND MY FRENCH AUTOMATE-IT'S GONE!
AND NOW...IT IS MIDNIGHT.

MONDAY NIGHT: A SLICK HIT-MAN CROUCHES ACROSS FROM THE OFFICES OF THE DAILY BUGLE...
...SPINNING OILED SILENCE ONTO A PIECE OF DEATH.

THE LAST DEADLINE HAS BEEN MADE, AND A WEARY REPORTER HEADS FOR A HOME HE MAY NEVER AGAIN ENJOY...

...IF NOT FOR--
CHUF
CHANK
WHAT--? MOON KNIGHT!

INDEED-- AND I ASK YOU: IS THAT ANY WAY TO TREAT A FINE INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER...
...WHO'S JUST ABOUT TO CONCLUDE HIS SERIES ON ORGANIZED CRIME?

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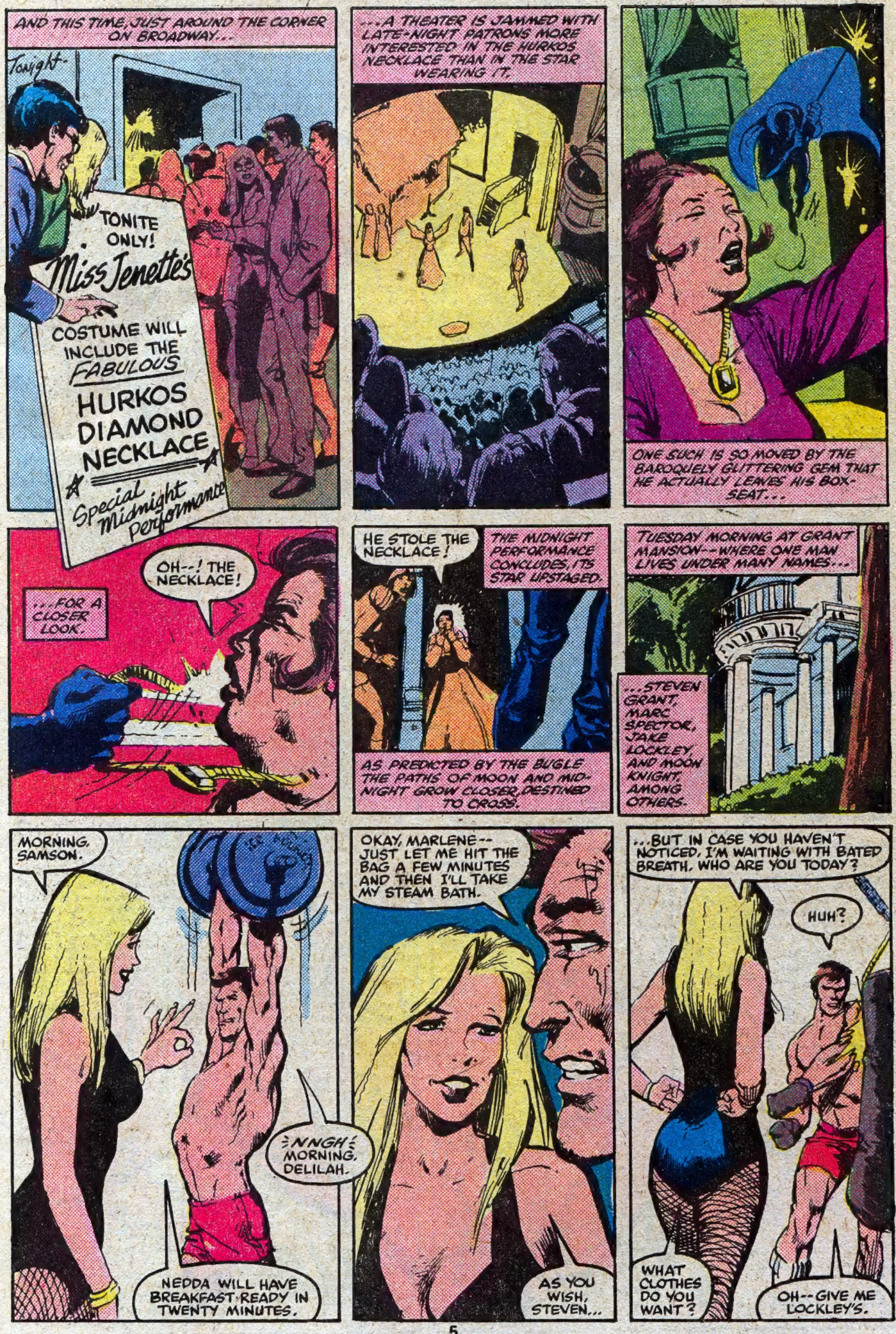
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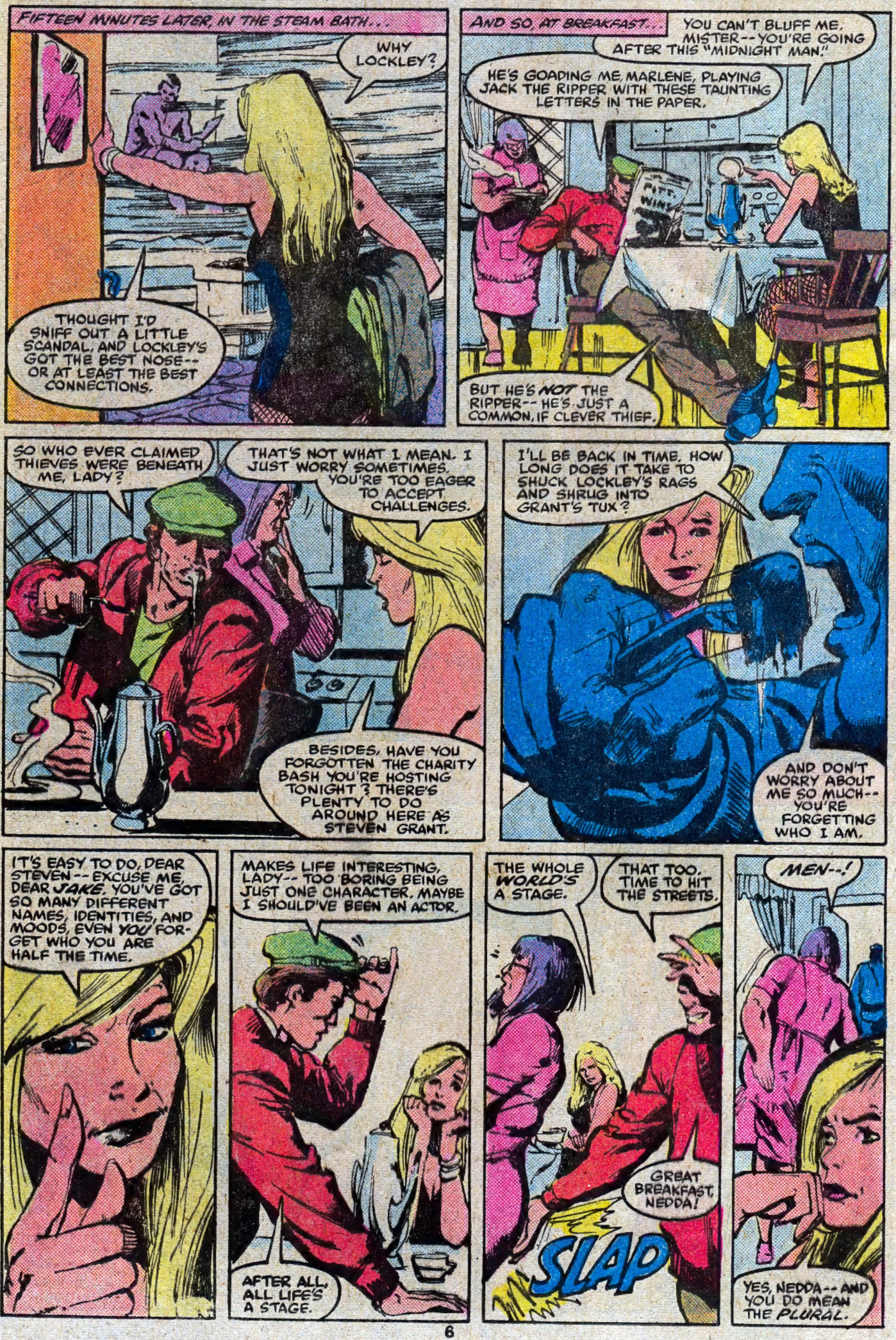
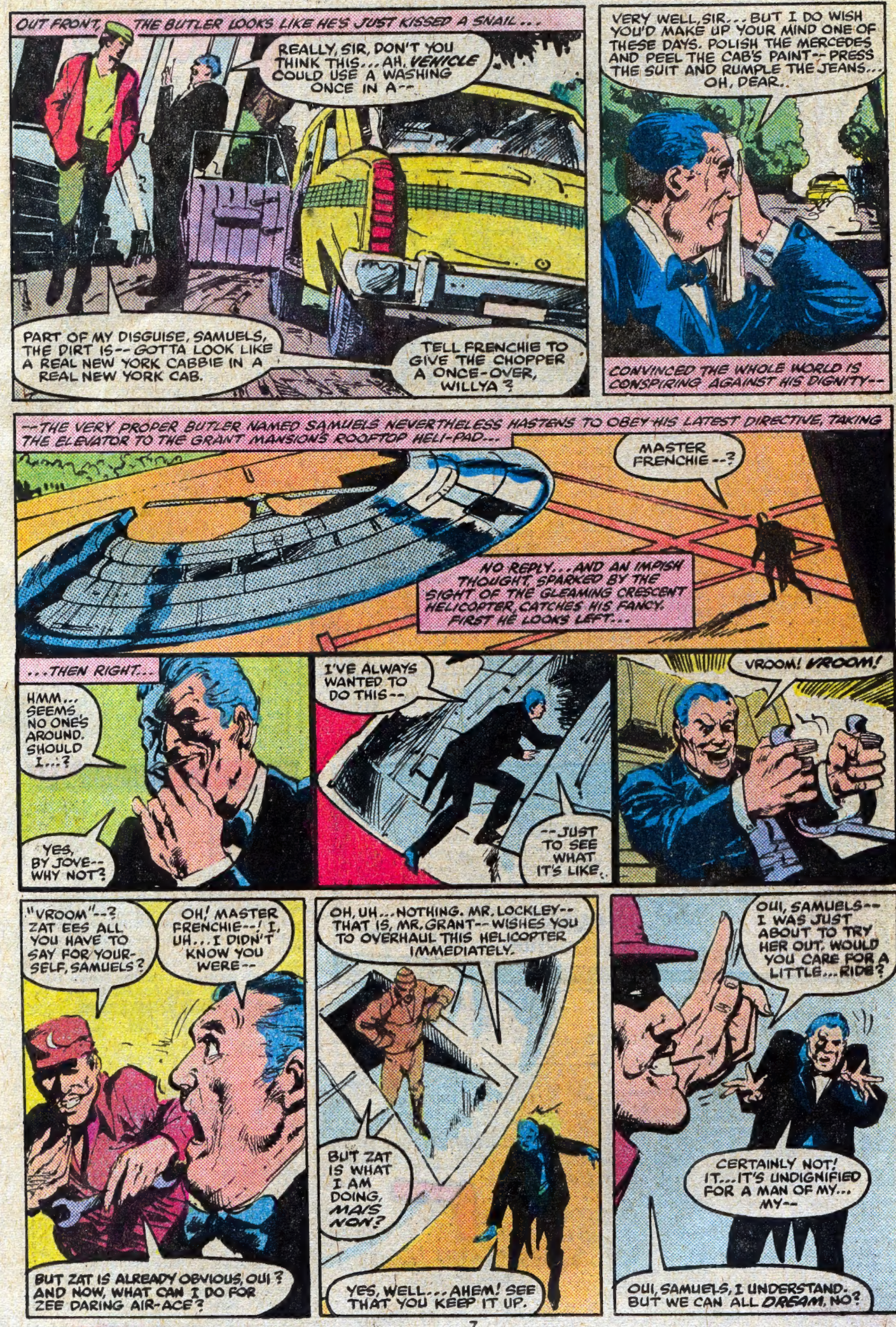
...A THEATER IS JAMMED WITH LATE-NIGHT PATRONS MORE INTERESTED IN THE HURKOS NECKLACE THAN IN THE STAR WEARING IT.
ONE SUCH IS SO MOVED BY THE BAROQUELY GLITTERING GEM THAT HE ACTUALLY LEAVES HIS BOX-SEAT...
...FOR A CLOSER LOOK.
OH--! THE NECKLACE!
HE STOLE THE NECKLACE!
THE MIDNIGHT PERFORMANCE CONCLUDES, ITS STAR UPSTAGED.
AS PREDICTED BY THE BUGLE THE PATHS OF MOON AND MIDNIGHT GROW CLOSER, DESTINED TO CROSS.
TUESDAY MORNING AT GRANT MANSION--WHERE ONE MAN LIVES UNDER MANY NAMES...
...STEVEN GRANT, MARC SPECTOR, JAKE LOCKLEY, AND MOON KNIGHT, AMONG OTHERS.
MORNING, SAMSON.
NNGH! MORNING, DELILAH.
NEDDA WILL HAVE BREAKFAST READY IN TWENTY MINUTES.
OKAY, MARLENE--JUST LET ME HIT THE BAG A FEW MINUTES AND THEN I'LL TAKE MY STEAM BATH.
AS YOU WISH, STEVEN...
...BUT IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I'M WAITING WITH BATED BREATH. WHO ARE YOU TODAY?
HUH?
WHAT CLOTHES DO YOU WANT?
OH--GIVE ME LOCKLEY'S.


FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, IN THE STEAM BATH...
WHY LOCKLEY?
THOUGHT I'D SNIFF OUT A LITTLE SCANDAL, AND LOCKLEY'S GOT THE BEST NOSE-- OR AT LEAST THE BEST CONNECTIONS.
AND SO, AT BREAKFAST...
YOU CAN'T BLUFF ME, MISTER--YOU'RE GOING AFTER THIS "MIDNIGHT MAN."
HE'S GOADING ME, MARLENE, PLAYING JACK THE RIPPER WITH THESE TAUNTING LETTERS IN THE PAPER.
BUT HE'S NOT THE RIPPER-- HE'S JUST A COMMON, IF CLEVER THIEF.
SO WHO EVER CLAIMED THIEVES WERE BENEATH ME, LADY?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN. I JUST WORRY SOMETIMES, YOU'RE TOO EAGER TO ACCEPT CHALLENGES.
BESIDES, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE CHARITY BASH YOU'RE HOSTING TONIGHT? THERE'S PLENTY TO DO AROUND HERE AS STEVEN GRANT.
I'LL BE BACK IN TIME. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO SHUCK LOCKLEY'S RAGS AND SHRUG INTO GRANT'S TUX?
AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME SO MUCH-- YOU'RE FORGETTING WHO I AM.
IT'S EASY TO DO, DEAR STEVEN-- EXCUSE ME, DEAR JAKE. YOU'VE GOT SO MANY DIFFERENT NAMES, IDENTITIES, AND MOODS, EVEN YOU FORGET WHO YOU ARE HALF THE TIME.
MAKES LIFE INTERESTING, LADY-- TOO BORING BEING JUST ONE CHARACTER. MAYBE I SHOULD'VE BEEN AN ACTOR.
AFTER ALL, ALL LIFE'S A STAGE.
THE WHOLE WORLD'S A STAGE.
THAT TOO. TIME TO HIT THE STREETS.
GREAT BREAKFAST, NEDDA!
SLAP
MEN--!
YES, NEDDA-- AND YOU DO MEAN THE PLURAL.


OUT FRONT, THE BUTLER LOOKS LIKE HE'S JUST KISSED A SNAIL...
REALLY, SIR, DON'T YOU THINK THIS... AH, VEHICLE COULD USE A WASHING ONCE IN A--
PART OF MY DISGUISE, SAMUELS, THE DIRT IS-- GOTTA LOOK LIKE A REAL NEW YORK CABBIE IN A REAL NEW YORK CAB.
TELL FRENCHIE TO GIVE THE CHOPPER A ONCE-OVER, WILLYA?
VERY WELL, SIR... BUT I DO WISH YOU'D MAKE UP YOUR MIND ONE OF THESE DAYS. POLISH THE MERCEDES AND PEEL THE CAB'S PAINT-- PRESS THE SUIT AND RUMPLE THE JEANS... OH, DEAR..
CONVINCED THE WHOLE WORLD IS CONSPIRING AGAINST HIS DIGNITY--
--THE VERY PROPER BUTLER NAMED SAMUELS NEVERTHELESS HASTENS TO OBEY HIS LATEST DIRECTIVE, TAKING THE ELEVATOR TO THE GRANT MANSION'S ROOFTOP HELI-PAD...
MASTER FRENCHIE--?
NO REPLY... AND AN IMPISH THOUGHT, SPARKED BY THE SIGHT OF THE GLEAMING CRESCENT HELICOPTER, CATCHES HIS FANCY. FIRST HE LOOKS LEFT...
...THEN RIGHT...
HMM... SEEMS NO ONE'S AROUND. SHOULD I...?
YES, BY JOVE-- WHY NOT?
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO THIS--
--JUST TO SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE.
VROOM! VROOM!
"VROOM"--? ZAT EES ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOUR-SELF, SAMUELS?
OH! MASTER FRENCHIE--! I, UH... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE--
BUT ZAT IS ALREADY OBVIOUS, OUI? AND NOW, WHAT CAN I DO FOR ZEE DARING AIR-ACE?
OH, UH... NOTHING. MR. LOCKLEY-- THAT IS, MR. GRANT-- WISHES YOU TO OVERHAUL THIS HELICOPTER IMMEDIATELY.
BUT ZAT IS WHAT I AM DOING, MAIS NON?
YES, WELL... AHEM! SEE THAT YOU KEEP IT UP.
OUI, SAMUELS-- I WAS JUST ABOUT TO TRY HER OUT. WOULD YOU CARE FOR A LITTLE... RIDE?
CERTAINLY NOT! IT... IT'S UNDIGNIFIED FOR A MAN OF MY... MY--
OUI, SAMUELS, I UNDERSTAND. BUT WE CAN ALL DREAM, NO?

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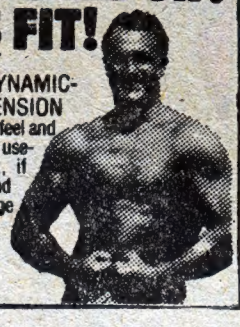

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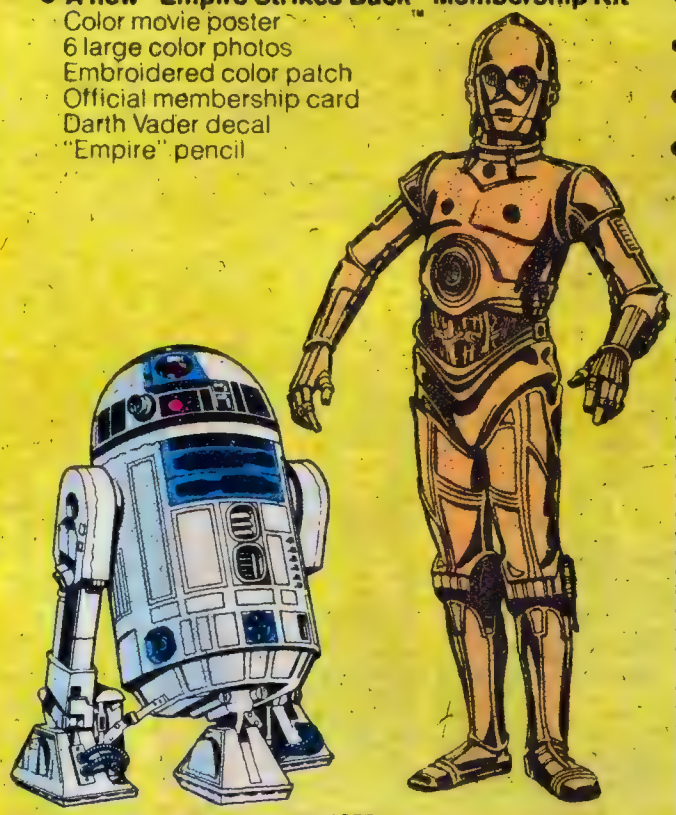

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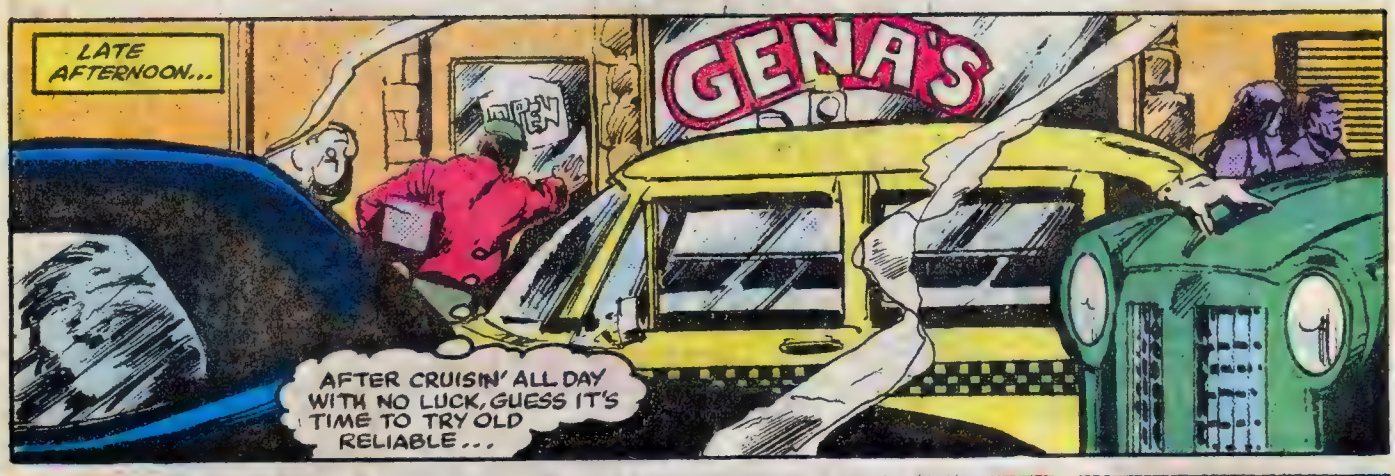
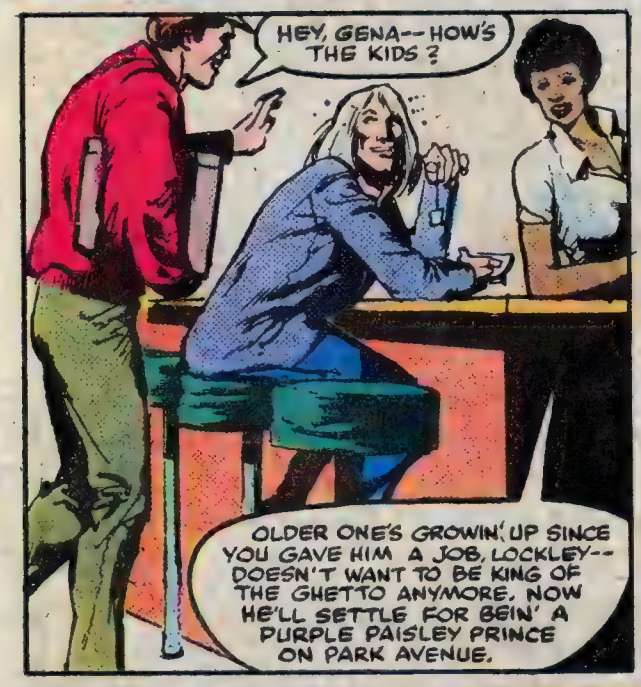
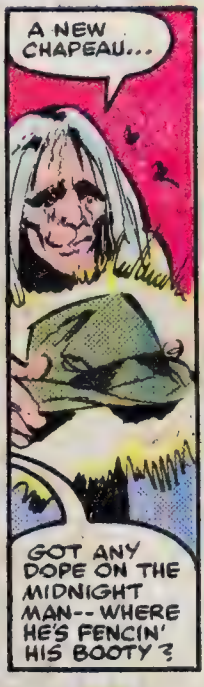

LATE AFTERNOON...
GEN A'S
AFTER CRUISIN' ALL DAY WITH NO LUCK, GUESS IT'S TIME TO TRY OLD RELIABLE...

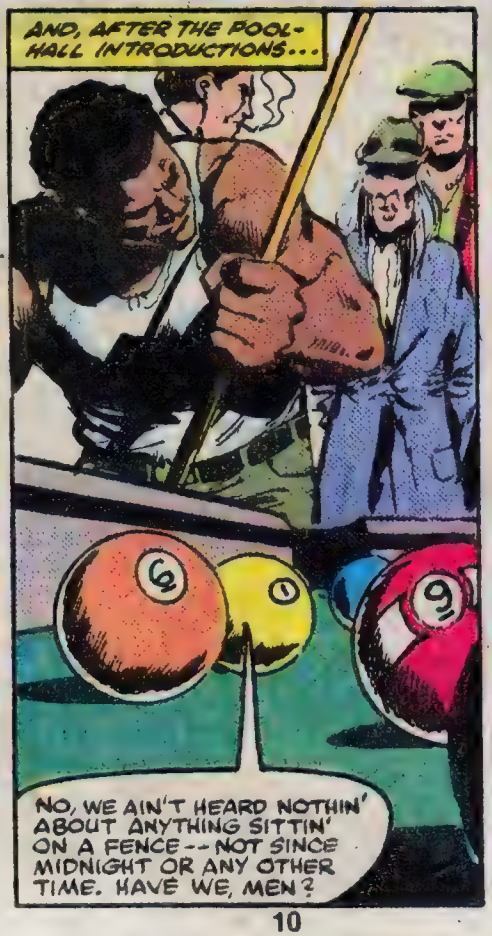

HEY, GENA--HOW'S THE KIDS?
OLDER ONE'S GROWIN' UP SINCE YOU GAVE HIM A JOB, LOCKLEY--DOESN'T WANT TO BE KING OF THE GHETTO ANYMORE. NOW HE'LL SETTLE FOR BEIN' A PURPLE PAISLEY PRINCE ON PARK AVENUE.

SAY, CRAWLEY--GOT A LITTLE PRESENT FOR YA.
A PRESENT--FOR ME, JAKE?


A NEW CHAPEAU...
GOT ANY DOPE ON THE MIDNIGHT MAN--WHERE HE'S FENCIN' HIS BOOTY?

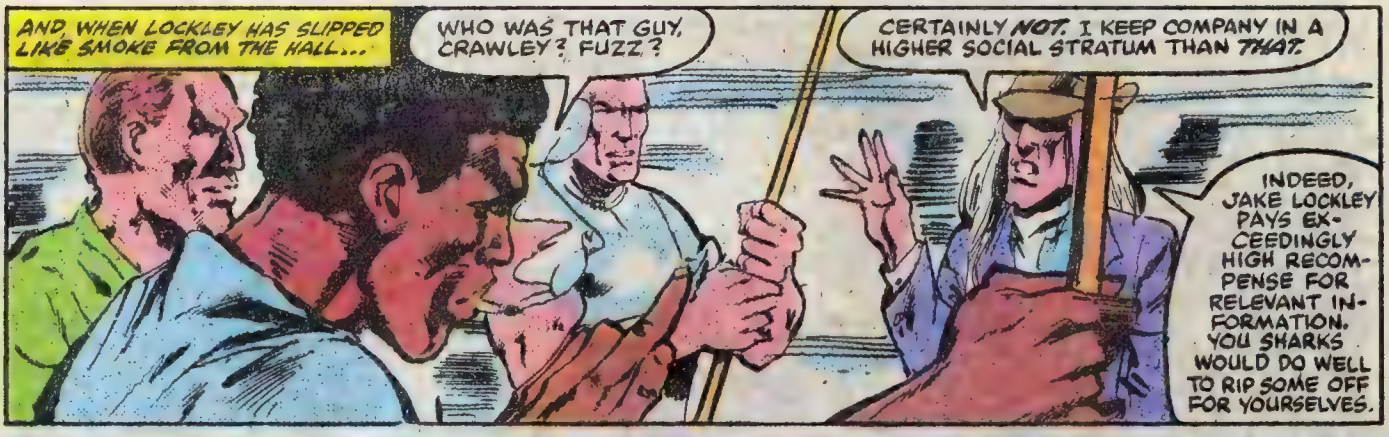
I MIGHT--BUT A MAN OF MY GENTLEMANLY UPBRINGING CANNOT BE BRIBED BY GIFTS OF THIS NATURE, SIR.
THERE'S A TWENTY DOLLAR BILL IN THE BRIM, CRAWLEY.

IN THAT CASE, TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION AS PITHILY AS POSSIBLE--NO. HOWSOMEVER, PERHAPS THE GENTLEMEN ACROSS THE AVENUE AT CUE'S BILLIARD EMPORIUM MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.
CATSU
I SHALL ENDEAVOR TO ESCORT YOU, JAKE, IF YOU SO WISH.
LEAD THE WAY, MY GOOD MAN.
DON'T FORGET TO TAKE YOUR TEABAG, CRAWLEY--YOU ONLY BOUGHT IT LAST TUESDAY.


AND, AFTER THE POOL-HALL INTRODUCTIONS...
NO, WE AIN'T HEARD NOTHIN' ABOUT ANYTHING SITTIN' ON A FENCE--NOT SINCE MIDNIGHT OR ANY OTHER TIME. HAVE WE, MEN?

NO.
NOT...
A...
...THING.

DO TELL. WELL, IF ANYONE HAS A MEMORY ATTACK, I'LL BE OUT IN THE ALLEY IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.
KLAK


AND, WHEN LOCKLEY HAS SLIPPED LIKE SMOKE FROM THE HALL...
WHO WAS THAT GUY, CRAWLEY? FUZZ?
CERTAINLY NOT. I KEEP COMPANY IN A HIGHER SOCIAL STRATUM THAN THAT.
INDEED, JAKE LOCKLEY PAYS EXCEEDINGLY HIGH RECOMPENSE FOR RELEVANT INFORMATION. YOU SHARKS WOULD DO WELL TO RIP SOME OFF FOR YOURSELVES.

YEAHHH...?
A WINK, TWO NODS, AND CONSPIRACY IS BORN...

...IN THE ALLEY...
HE SAID FIFTEEN MINUTES--WHICH GIVES US FIVE MORE BEFORE WE GRAB HIS MONEY.
YOU TWO HIDE BEHIND THEM TRASH CANS AND--

SHHHTUNK

THAT WOULDN'T BE TOO SMART, BOYS. IF YOU GRABBED HIS MONEY, HOW WOULD HE PAY YOU FOR THE INFO YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME FREE?
Blended Scotch WHISKEY

THE MOON KNIGHT!! GET HI--UNFF!
SWOK
SPLAM
CHUD

THE MIDNIGHT MAN--WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM? WHERE DOES HE FENCE HIS LOOT?
HE--HE DON'T FENCE IT! FAR AS I KNOW, HE MUST KEEP IT!
B-BUT THE WORD IS...HE... HE'S GONNA TAKE YOU ON TONIGHT...
ME? HOW?
I...I DUNNO--ALL'S I KNOW IS HE'S GONNA FIX IT SOMEHOW-- BAIT AN OFFER YA CAN'T REFUSE.
HONEST--! IT'S COMIN' DOWN TONIGHT-- BIG!
THANKS FOR THE INFORMATION.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...
...IT APPEARS I'VE GOT AN INTERESTING NIGHT AHEAD.
A PLACE FOR EVERY-THING...
...AND EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE.
CRAWLEY PLAYED HIS PART TO THE TEE-- GLAD I PUT HIM ON MOON KNIGHT'S PAYROLL ALONG WITH GENA'S SONS.
SHOP
BUT RIGHT NOW, IT'S GETTING LATE...
...AND IT WOULDN'T LOOK RIGHT FOR ME TO MISS GRANT'S SHINDIG.
ALMOST LIKE BEIN' LATE FOR MY OWN PARTY.

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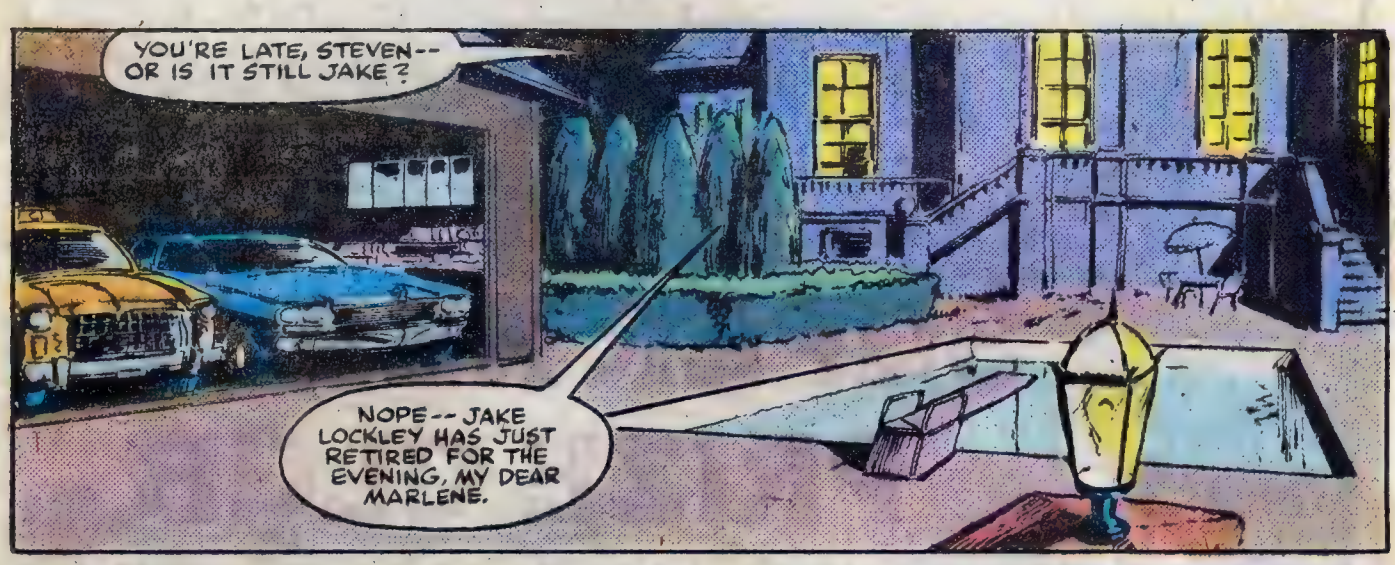
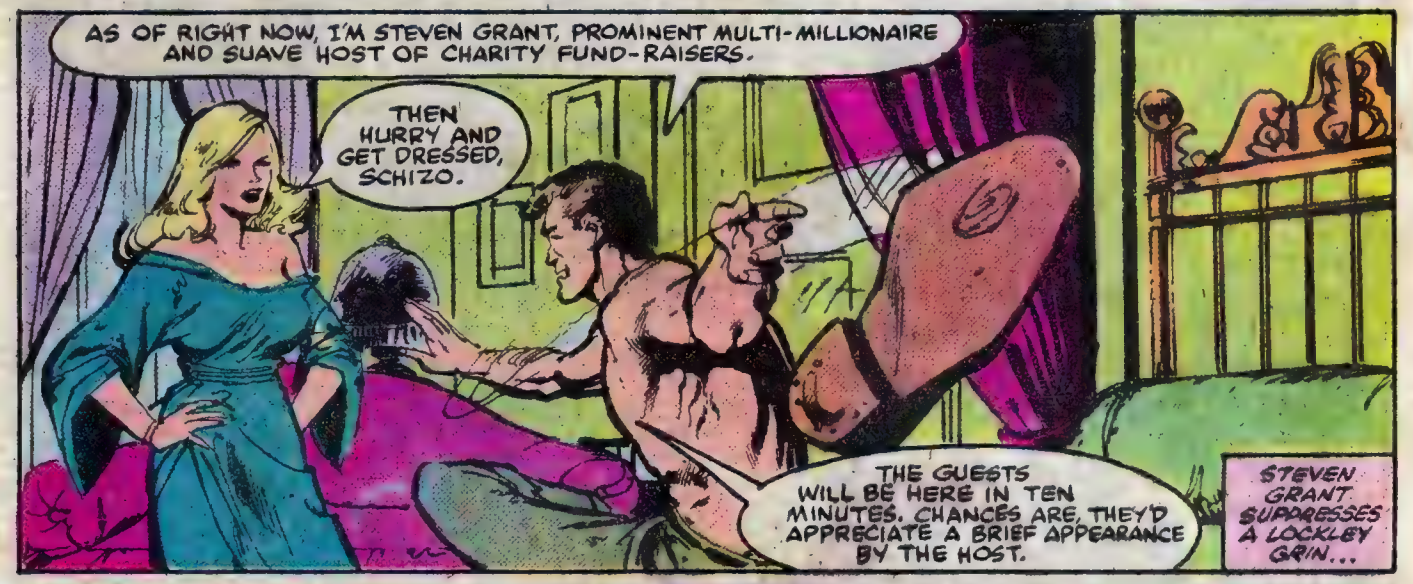
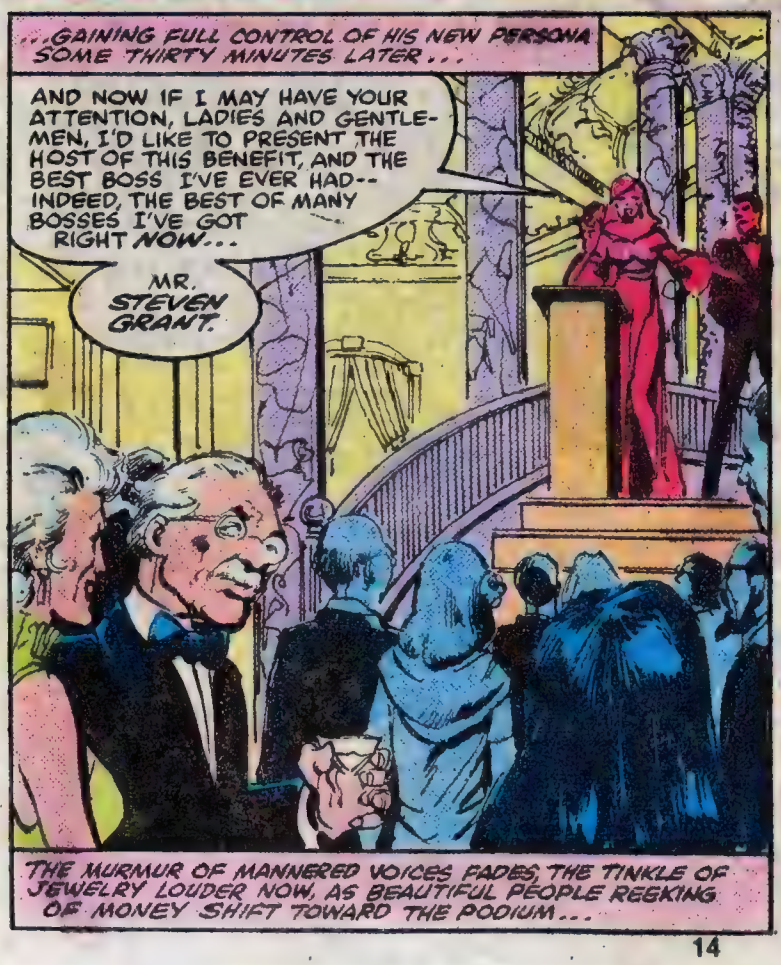
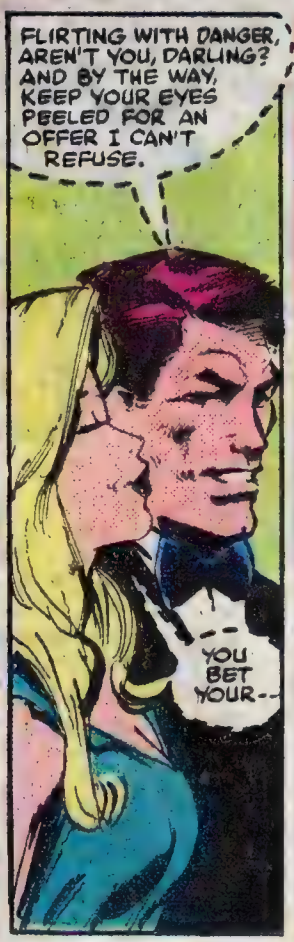

YOU'RE LATE, STEVEN-- OR IS IT STILL JAKE?
NOPE-- JAKE LOCKLEY HAS JUST RETIRED FOR THE EVENING, MY DEAR MARLENE.

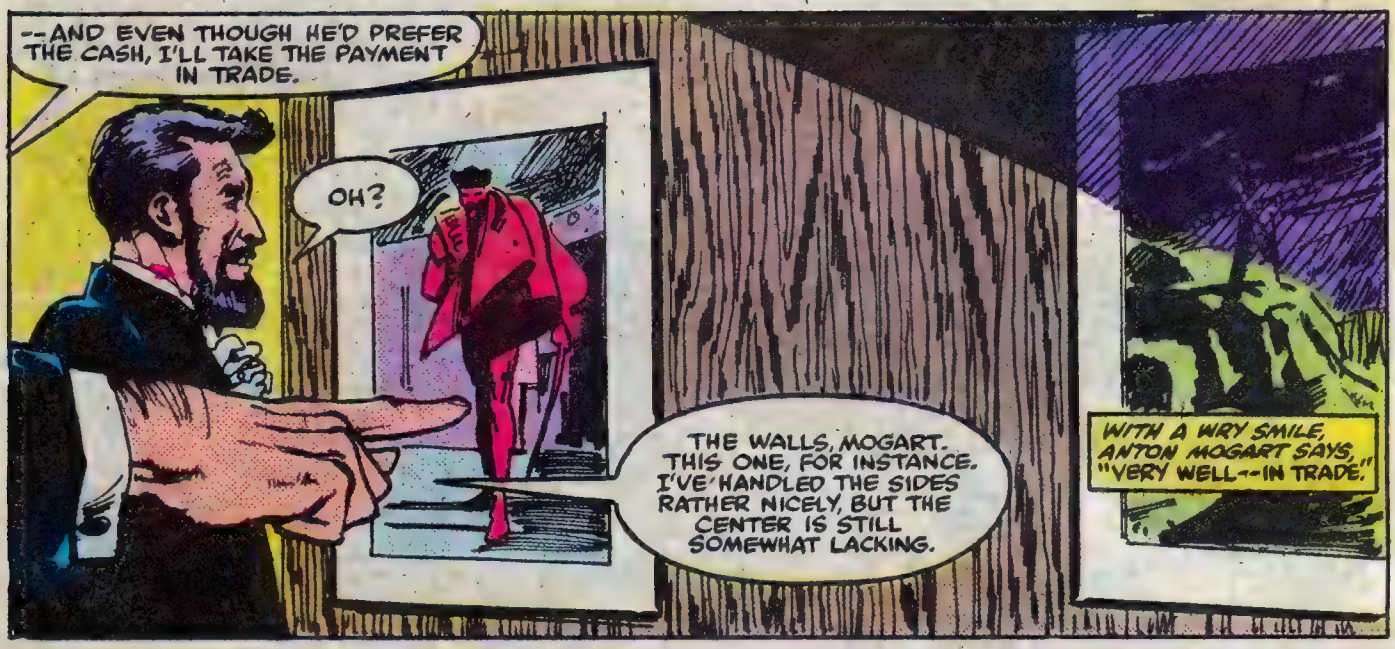

AS OF RIGHT NOW, I'M STEVEN GRANT, PROMINENT MULTI-MILLIONAIRE AND SUAVE HOST OF CHARITY FUND-RAISERS.
THEN HURRY AND GET DRESSED, SCHIZO.
THE GUESTS WILL BE HERE IN TEN MINUTES. CHANCES ARE, THEY'D APPRECIATE A BRIEF APPEARANCE BY THE HOST.
STEVEN GRANT SUPPRESSES A LOCKLEY GRIN...

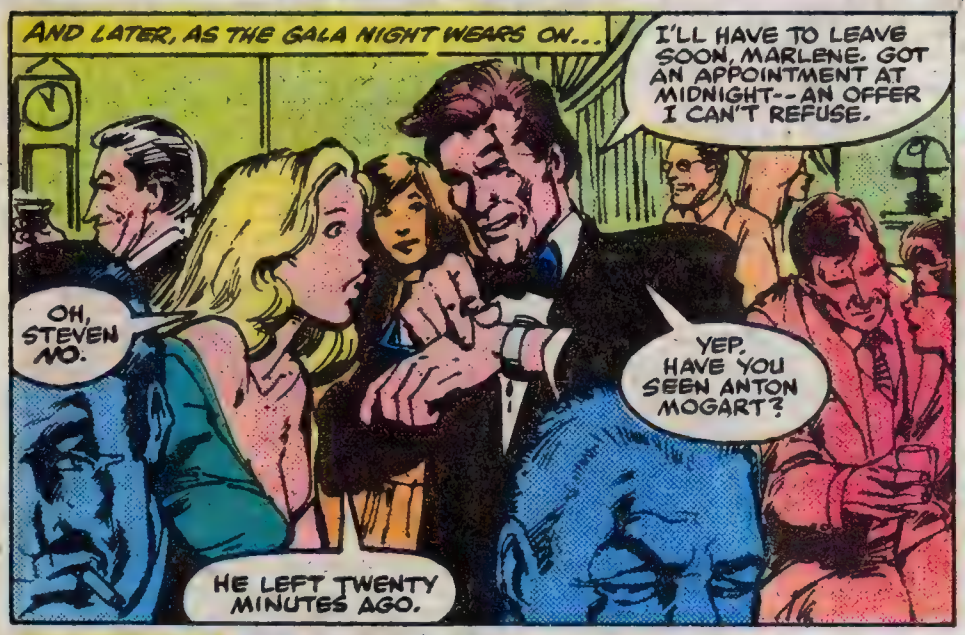

...GAINING FULL CONTROL OF HIS NEW PERSONA SOME THIRTY MINUTES LATER...
AND NOW IF I MAY HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'D LIKE TO PRESENT THE HOST OF THIS BENEFIT, AND THE BEST BOSS I'VE EVER HAD-- INDEED, THE BEST OF MANY BOSSES I'VE GOT RIGHT NOW...
MR. STEVEN GRANT.
THE MURMUR OF MANNERED VOICES FADES, THE TINKLE OF JEWELRY LOUDER NOW, AS BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE REEKING OF MONEY SHIFT TOWARD THE PODIUM...

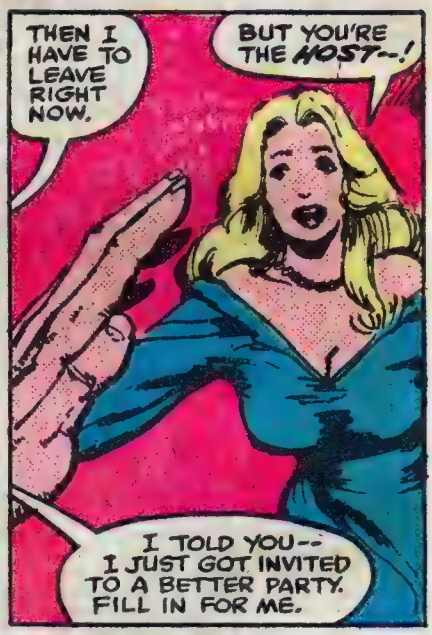

FLIRTING WITH DANGER, AREN'T YOU, DARLING? AND BY THE WAY, KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR AN OFFER I CAN'T REFUSE.
--YOU BET YOUR--

HUH--?
THANK YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. YOU'VE ALREADY MADE YOUR DONATIONS, SO I WON'T RUB ANY SALT INTO THE WOUND WITH A LONG-WINDED SPEECH. EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY--OR AT LEAST ELEGANT.
END OF SPEECH.

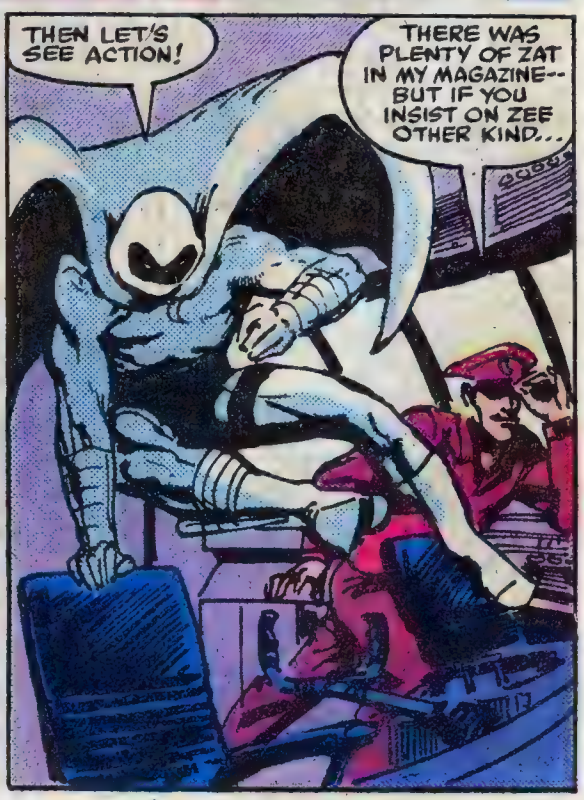
THE MURMUR RETURNS AS GRANT DRIFTS INTO THE GATHERING...
BEST SPEECH I'VE ALMOST HEARD IN YEARS, GRANT.
THANK YOU, MR....?
MOGART-- ANTON MOGART.
MY CARD.
THE ART COLLECTOR-- OF COURSE. HOW'S THE PRICE OF CANVAS THESE DAYS?
HIGH, VERY HIGH.
AS A MATTER OF FACT...
"...I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT IT-- PRIVATELY."
THIS PRIVATE ENOUGH, MOGART?
INDEED. BIT OF A COLLECTOR YOURSELF, GRANT.
A MERE DABBLER. ONE MUST DO SOMETHING WITH ONE'S MONEY AND WALLS, AND SOMEHOW--
--GEORGE WASHINGTON WALLPAPER IS JUST A TRIFLE GAUCHE. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
FEAR, MR. GRANT.
I UNDERSTAND AN ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS HAPPENS TO BE A SOLDIER-OF-FORTUNE NAMED MARC SPECTOR, WHO CONTRACTS FOR CERTAIN... AH, DANGEROUS UNDERTAKINGS.
YOU'VE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK, MOGART. WHAT SORT OF CONTRACT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?
PROTECTING SOME PAINTINGS FROM IMMINENT THEFT-- BY THE MIDNIGHT MAN. THE FEE WOULD, BE, LET US SAY, $100,000. THESE CANVASES, YOU SEE, ARE VALUABLE.
'TWOULD SEEM SO. HOW DO YOU KNOW THE MIDNIGHT MAN HAS HIS SIGHTS ON THEM?
BY THE MOST DIRECT MEANS POSSIBLE. HE TOLD ME SO-- IN AN EXTREMELY LITERATE NOTE. HE PLANS TO RELIEVE ME OF THE PAINTINGS TONIGHT.
SCORE HIM HIGH FOR AUDACITY ANYWAY.
HAVE YOU INFORMED THE AUTHORITIES?
THEY WOULD ONLY BUNGLE IT. BESIDES, IF YOU DON'T MIND CANDOR, THERE ARE CERTAIN, AH, DETAILS CONCERNING MY ACQUISITION OF THE PAINTINGS WHICH I'D JUST AS SOON KEEP FROM THE POLICE. COLLECTOR'S MANIA, YOU KNOW.
OF COURSE. SPECTOR OWES ME A FAVOR. I'LL SUBCONTRACT THE JOB IN HIS BEHALF--


--AND EVEN THOUGH HE'D PREFER THE CASH, I'LL TAKE THE PAYMENT IN TRADE.
OH?
THE WALLS, MOGART. THIS ONE, FOR INSTANCE. I'VE HANDLED THE SIDES RATHER NICELY, BUT THE CENTER IS STILL SOMEWHAT LACKING.
WITH A WRY SMILE, ANTON MOGART SAYS, "VERY WELL--IN TRADE."

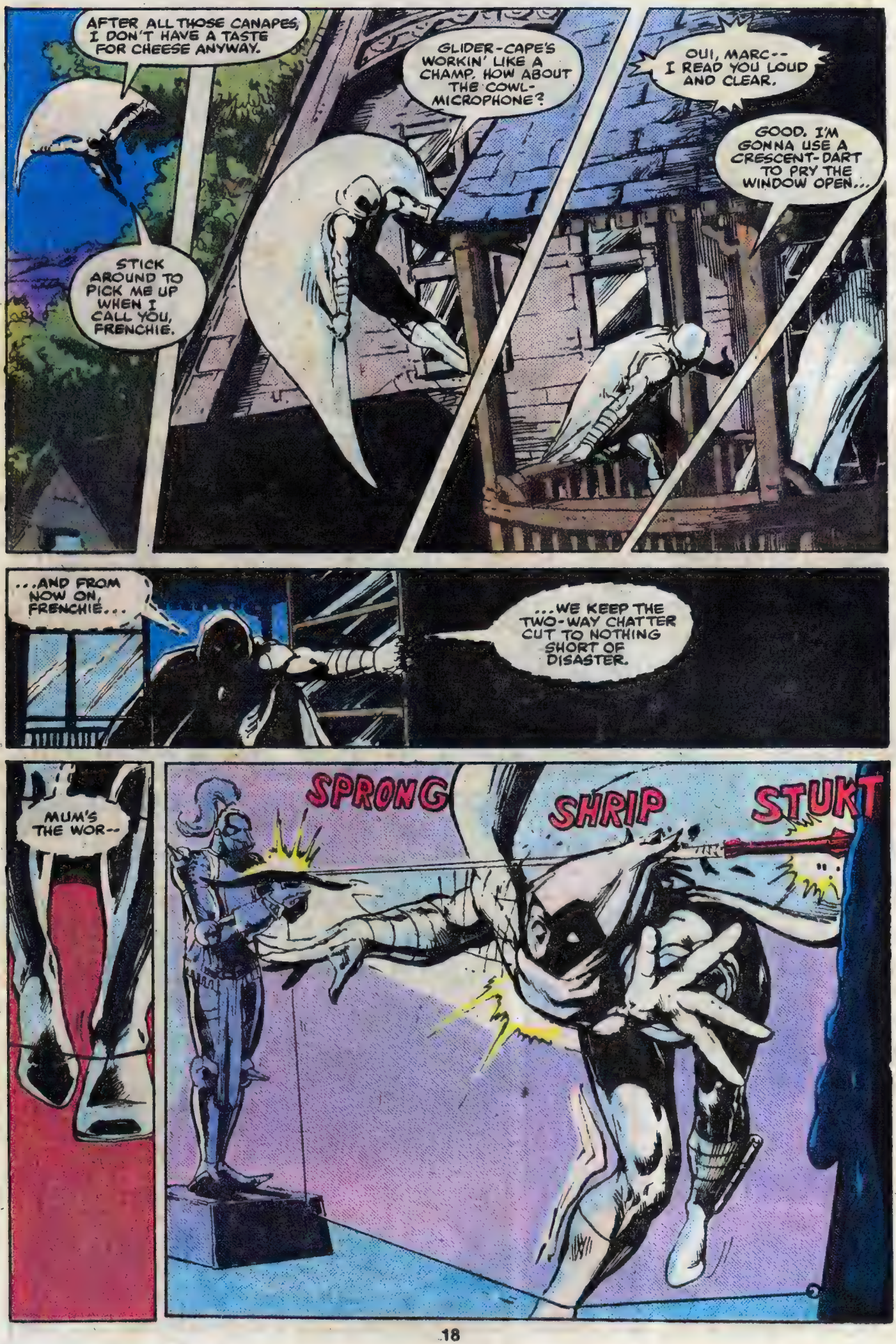

AND LATER, AS THE GALA NIGHT WEARS ON...
I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE SOON, MARLENE. GOT AN APPOINTMENT AT MIDNIGHT--AN OFFER I CAN'T REFUSE.
OH, STEVEN NO.
YEP. HAVE YOU SEEN ANTON MOGART?
HE LEFT TWENTY MINUTES AGO.

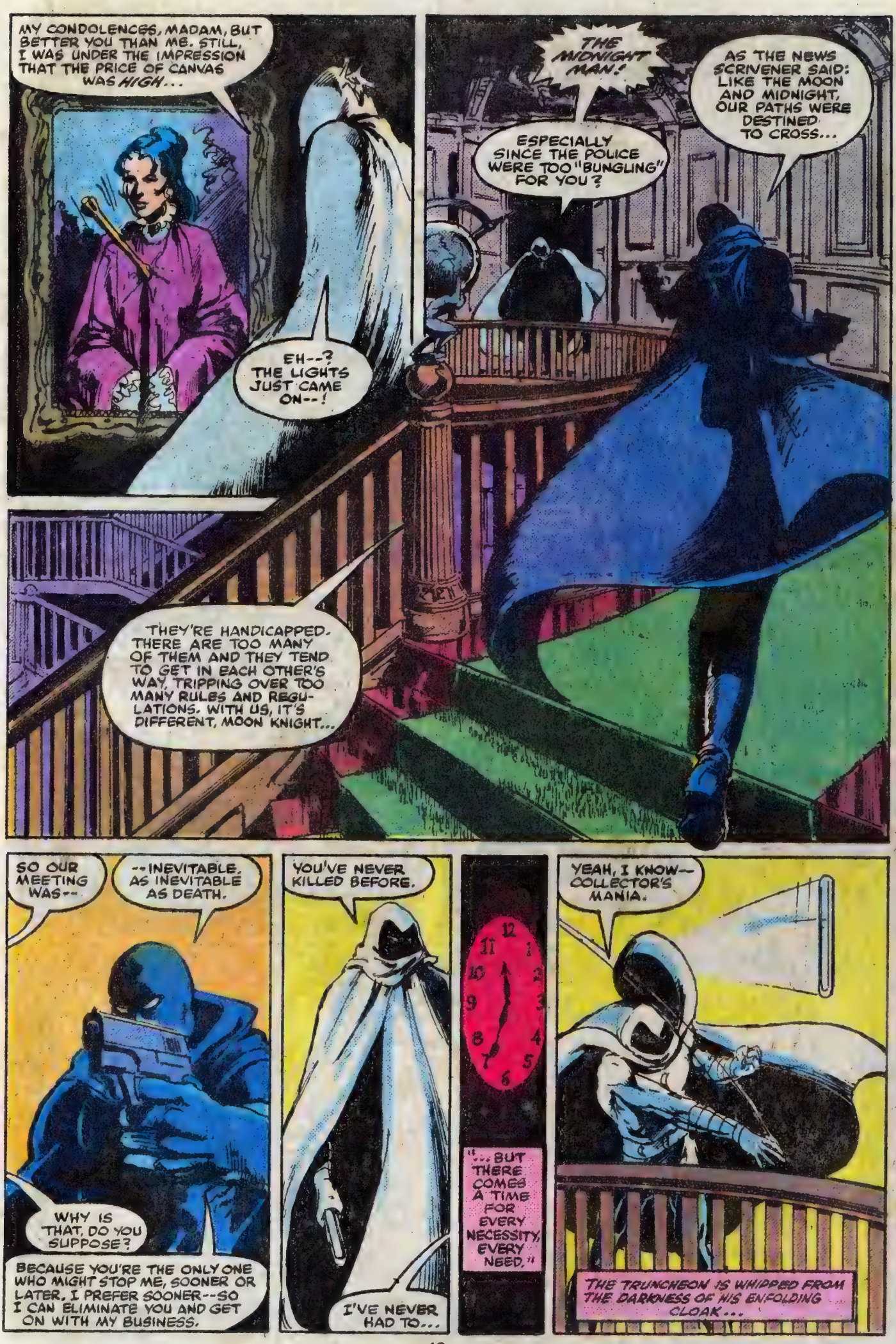

THEN I HAVE TO LEAVE RIGHT NOW.
BUT YOU'RE THE MOST--!
I TOLD YOU-- I JUST GOT INVITED TO A BETTER PARTY. FILL IN FOR ME.

ON THE ROOF...
READY, FRENCHIE?
EH--?
THE ADVENTURE of Fifi of Lorraine
OUI, MARC-- ON A MOMENT'S NOTICE!


THEN LET'S SEE ACTION!
THERE WAS PLENTY OF ZAT IN MY MAGAZINE-- BUT IF YOU INSIST ON ZEE OTHER KIND...

...WE ARE GONE-- NO?
YES, FRENCHIE.
WHAT THE DEVIL--? I THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING FLASH PAST THE WINDOW!
LOOK! IT'S A HELICOPTER-- STRANGEST ONE I'VE EVER SEEN--AND IT LOOKED LIKE IT ALMOST HIT THE ROOF!
JERSEY, FRENCHIE--THE HOME OF ANTON MOGART. THE ADDRESS SOUNDS LIKE IT OVERLOOKS THE RIVER. TIME?
ELEVEN-FIFTEEN, MARC. IS IT A TRAP?
LET'S JUST SAY IT'S BEEN BAITED FOR MIDNIGHT-- AND I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THE BAIT TURNS OUT TO BE BOGUS.
YOU MEAN...?
I MEAN... THE CAT MAY BE DISGUISED AS THE CHEESE.
THAT'S THE ONE, FRENCHIE--THE GOTHIC MONSTROSITY WITH ALL THE GABLES.
HERE'S WHERE I BAIL OUT, QUIET AS A MOUSE... BUT READY TO TANGLE WITH ANY BLACK-AS-MIDNIGHT CAT WHO CROSSES MY PATH...


AFTER ALL THOSE CANAPES, I DON'T HAVE A TASTE FOR CHEESE ANYWAY.
STICK AROUND TO PICK ME UP WHEN I CALL YOU, FRENCHIE.
GLIDER-CAPE'S WORKIN' LIKE A CHAMP. HOW ABOUT THE COWL-MICROPHONE?
OUI, MARC-- I READ YOU LOUD AND CLEAR.
GOOD. I'M GONNA USE A CRESCENT-DART TO PRY THE WINDOW OPEN...
...AND FROM NOW ON, FRENCHIE...
...WE KEEP THE TWO-WAY CHATTER CUT TO NOTHING SHORT OF DISASTER.
MUM'S THE WOR--
SPRONG
SHRIP
STUKT


MY CONDOLENCES, MADAM, BUT BETTER YOU THAN ME. STILL, I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PRICE OF CANVAS WAS HIGH...
EH--? THE LIGHTS JUST CAME ON--!
THE MIDNIGHT MAN!
ESPECIALLY SINCE THE POLICE WERE TOO "BUNGLING" FOR YOU?
AS THE NEWS SCRIVENER SAID: LIKE THE MOON AND MIDNIGHT, OUR PATHS WERE DESTINED TO CROSS...
THEY'RE HANDICAPPED. THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM AND THEY TEND TO GET IN EACH OTHER'S WAY, TRIPPING OVER TOO MANY RULES AND REGULATIONS. WITH US, IT'S DIFFERENT, MOON KNIGHT...
SO OUR MEETING WAS--
--INEVITABLE, AS INEVITABLE AS DEATH.
WHY IS THAT, DO YOU SUPPOSE?
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO MIGHT STOP ME, SOONER OR LATER. I PREFER SOONER--SO I CAN ELIMINATE YOU AND GET ON WITH MY BUSINESS.
YOU'VE NEVER KILLED BEFORE.
I'VE NEVER HAD TO...
"...BUT THERE COMES A TIME FOR EVERY NECESSITY, EVERY NEED."
YEAH, I KNOW--COLLECTOR'S MANIA.
THE TRUNCHEON IS WHIPPED FROM THE DARKNESS OF HIS ENFOLDING CLOAK...

LET DOCTOR DOOM TELL YOU HOW TO...

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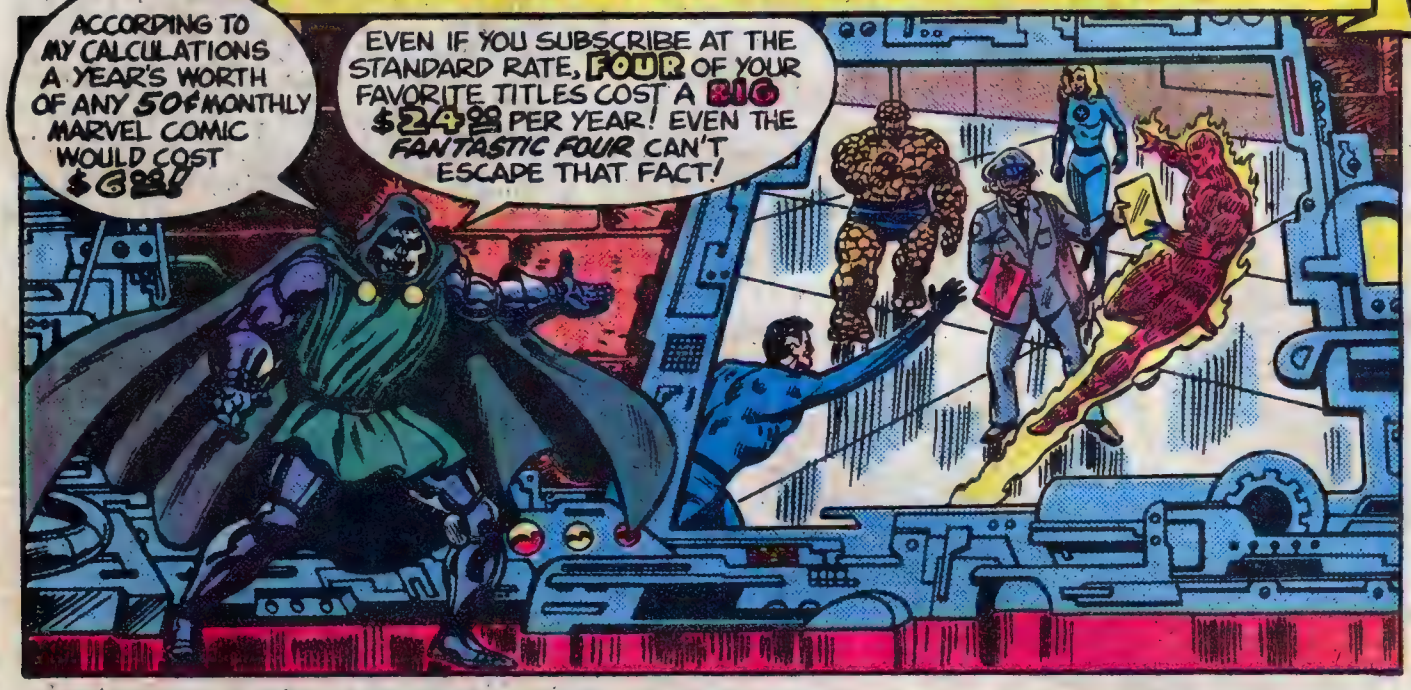

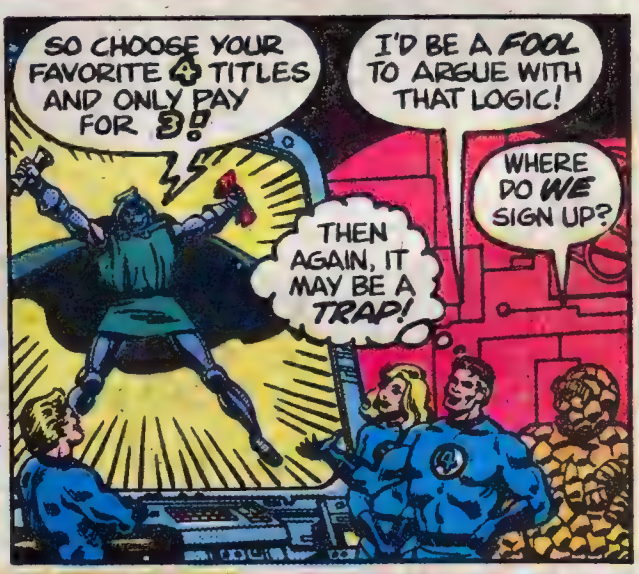

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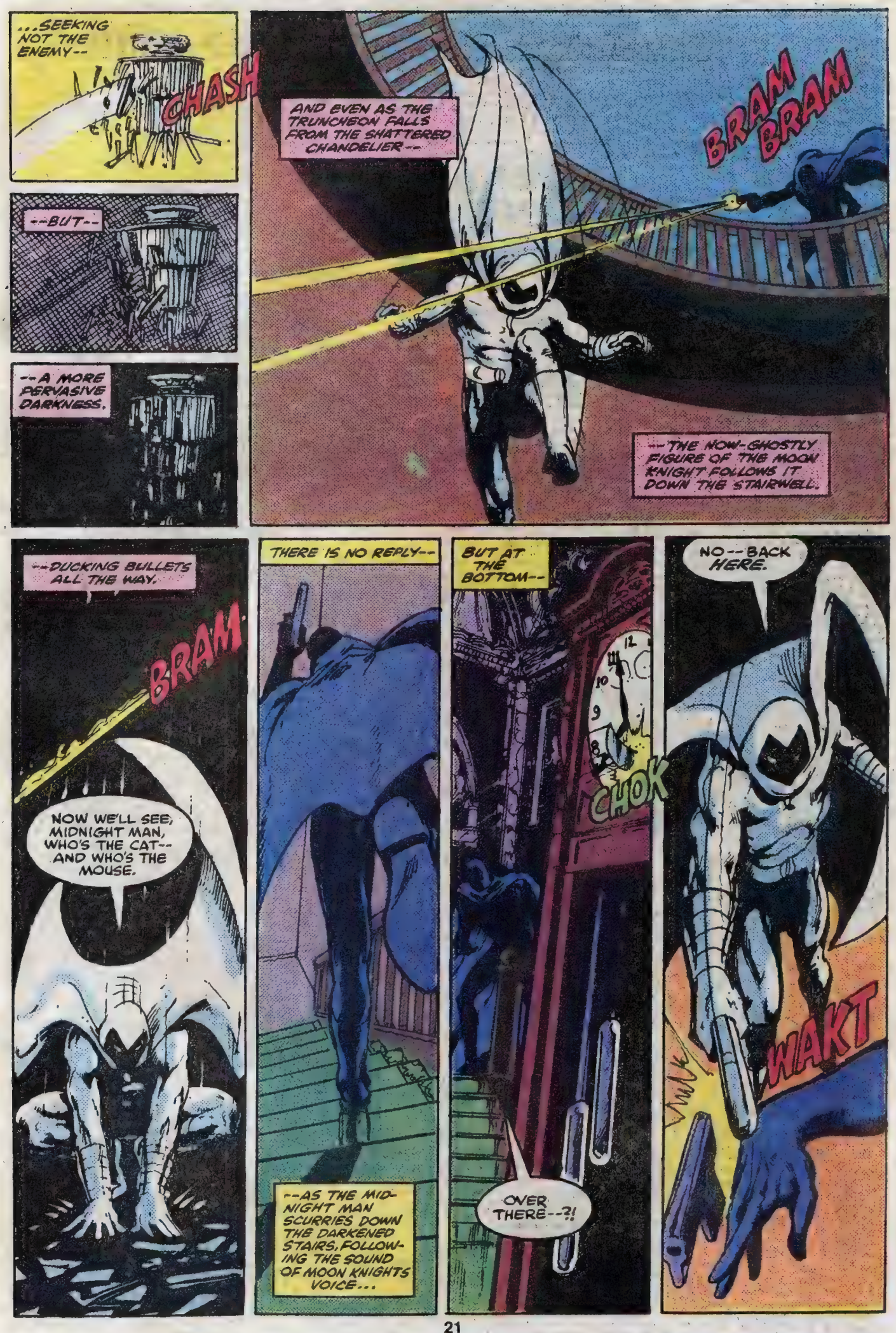
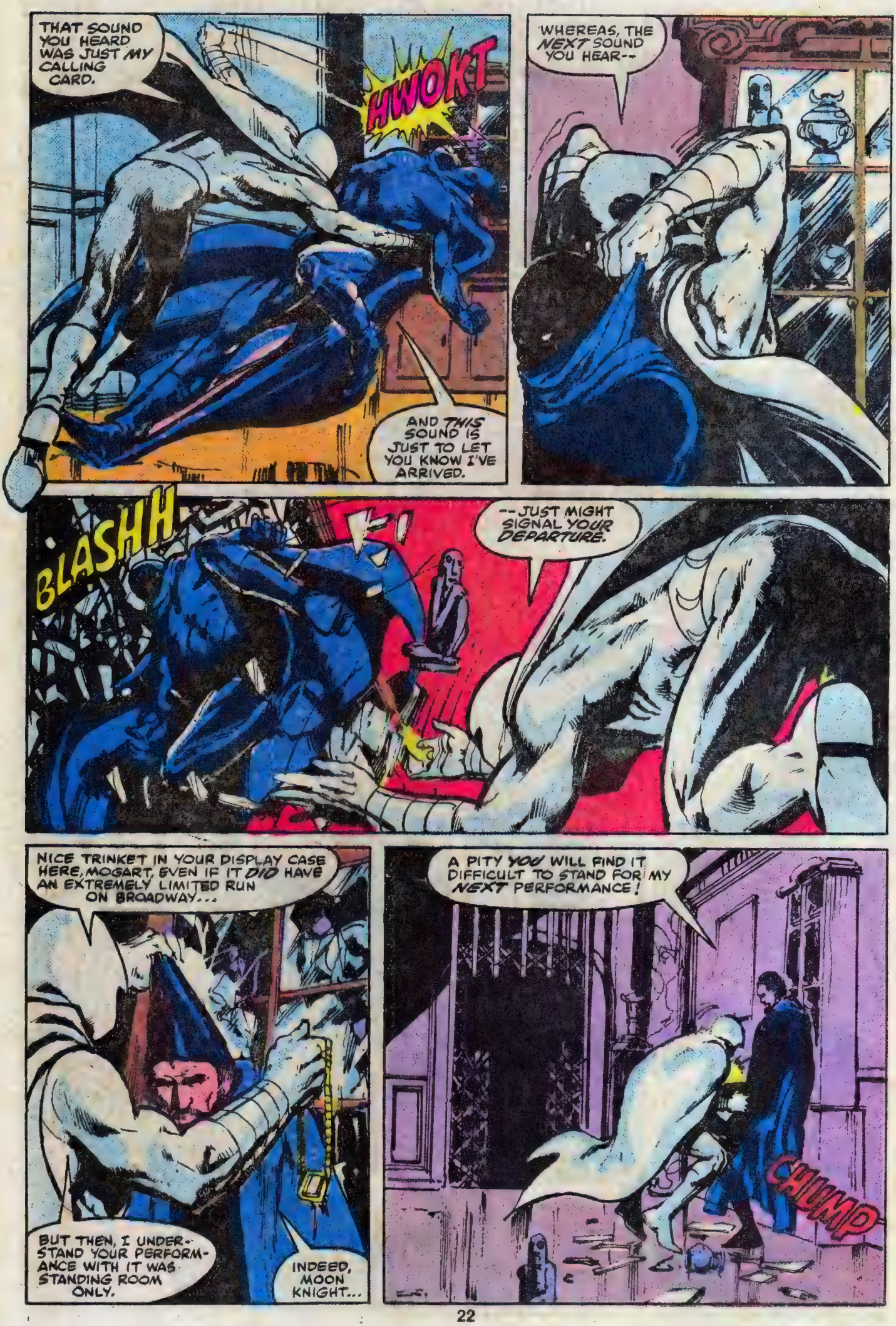
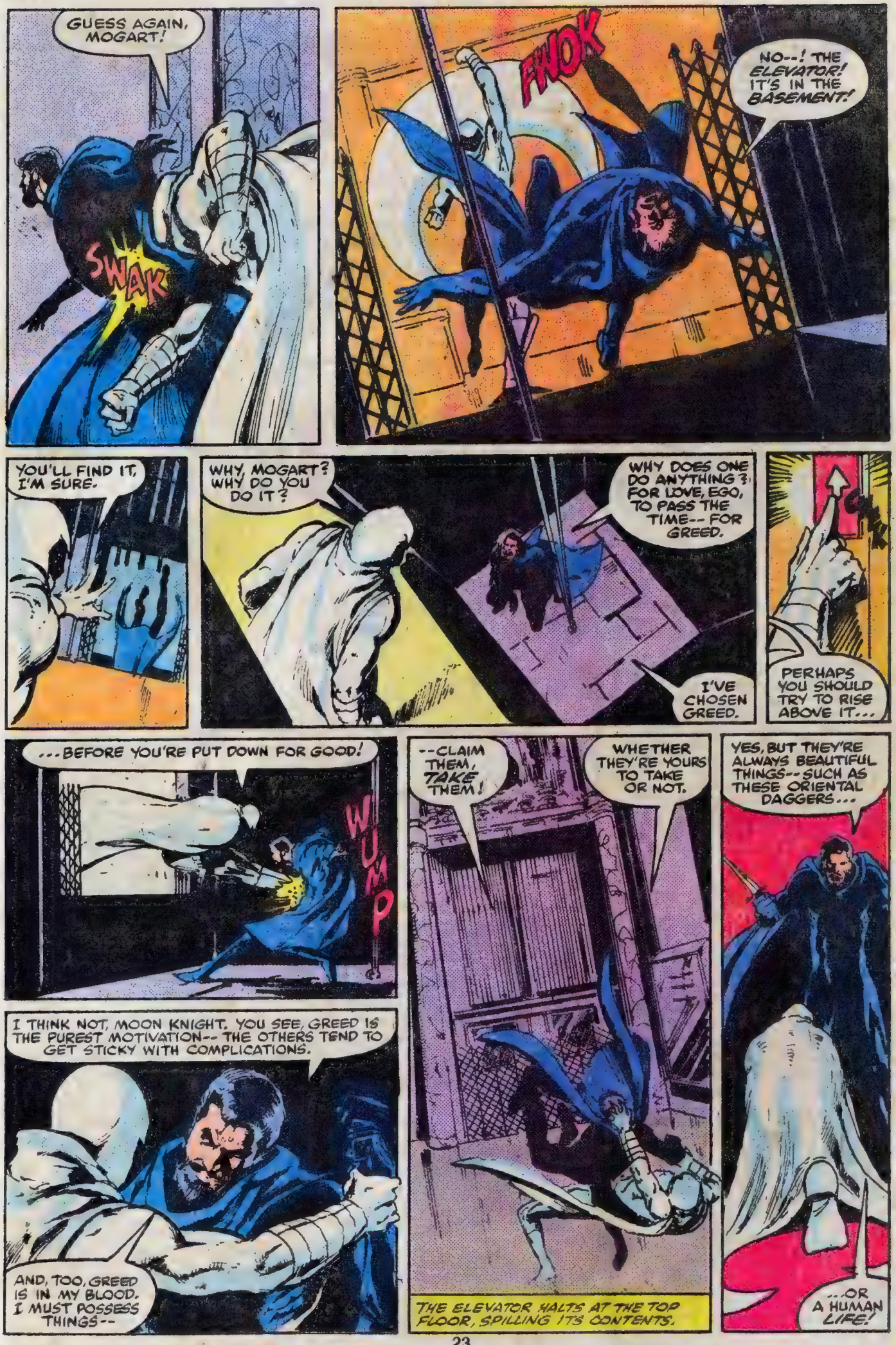

...SEEKING NOT THE ENEMY--
CHASH
--BUT--
--A MORE PERVASIVE DARKNESS.
AND EVEN AS THE TRUNCHEON FALLS FROM THE SHATTERED CHANDELIER--
BRAM BRAM
--THE NOW-GHOSTLY FIGURE OF THE MOON KNIGHT FOLLOWS IT DOWN THE STAIRWELL.
--DUCKING BULLETS ALL THE WAY.
BRAM
NOW WE'LL SEE, MIDNIGHT MAN, WHO'S THE CAT-- AND WHO'S THE MOUSE.
THERE IS NO REPLY--
--AS THE MIDNIGHT MAN SCURRIES DOWN THE DARKENED STAIRS, FOLLOWING THE SOUND OF MOON KNIGHTS VOICE...
BUT AT THE BOTTOM--
CHOK
OVER THERE--?!
NO--BACK HERE.
WAKT


THAT SOUND YOU HEARD WAS JUST MY CALLING CARD.
HWOK!
AND THIS SOUND IS JUST TO LET YOU KNOW I'VE ARRIVED.
WHEREAS, THE NEXT SOUND YOU HEAR--
BLASHH
--JUST MIGHT SIGNAL YOUR DEPARTURE.
NICE TRINKET IN YOUR DISPLAY CASE HERE, MOGART, EVEN IF IT DID HAVE AN EXTREMELY LIMITED RUN ON BROADWAY...
BUT THEN, I UNDERSTAND YOUR PERFORMANCE WITH IT WAS STANDING ROOM ONLY.
INDEED, MOON KNIGHT...
A PITY YOU WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO STAND FOR MY NEXT PERFORMANCE!
CHUMP


GUESS AGAIN, MOGART!
SWAK
FWOK
NO--! THE ELEVATOR! IT'S IN THE BASEMENT!
YOU'LL FIND IT, I'M SURE.
WHY, MOGART? WHY DO YOU DO IT?
WHY DOES ONE DO ANYTHING? FOR LOVE, EGO, TO PASS THE TIME-- FOR GREED.
I'VE CHOSEN GREED.
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TRY TO RISE ABOVE IT...
...BEFORE YOU'RE PUT DOWN FOR GOOD!
WUMP
--CLAIM THEM, TAKE THEM!
WHETHER THEY'RE YOURS TO TAKE OR NOT.
YES, BUT THEY'RE ALWAYS BEAUTIFUL THINGS-- SUCH AS THESE ORIENTAL DAGGERS...
I THINK NOT, MOON KNIGHT. YOU SEE, GREED IS THE PUREST MOTIVATION-- THE OTHERS TEND TO GET STICKY WITH COMPLICATIONS.
AND, TOO, GREED IS IN MY BLOOD. I MUST POSSESS THINGS--
THE ELEVATOR HALTS AT THE TOP FLOOR, SPILLING ITS CONTENTS.
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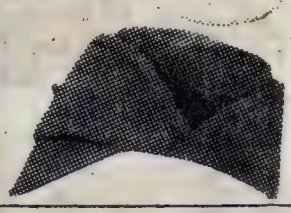

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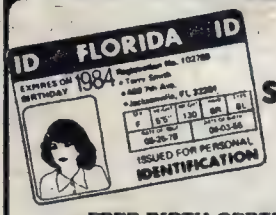

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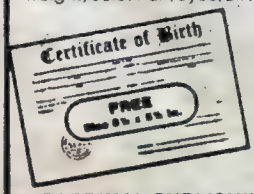

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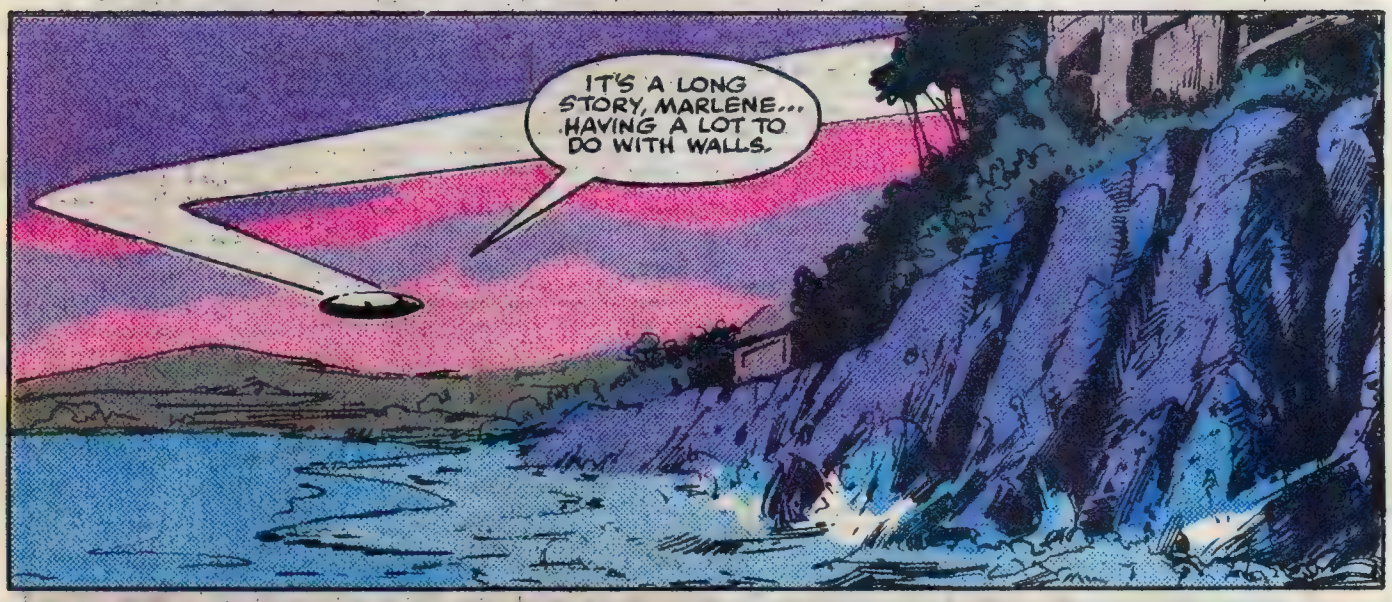
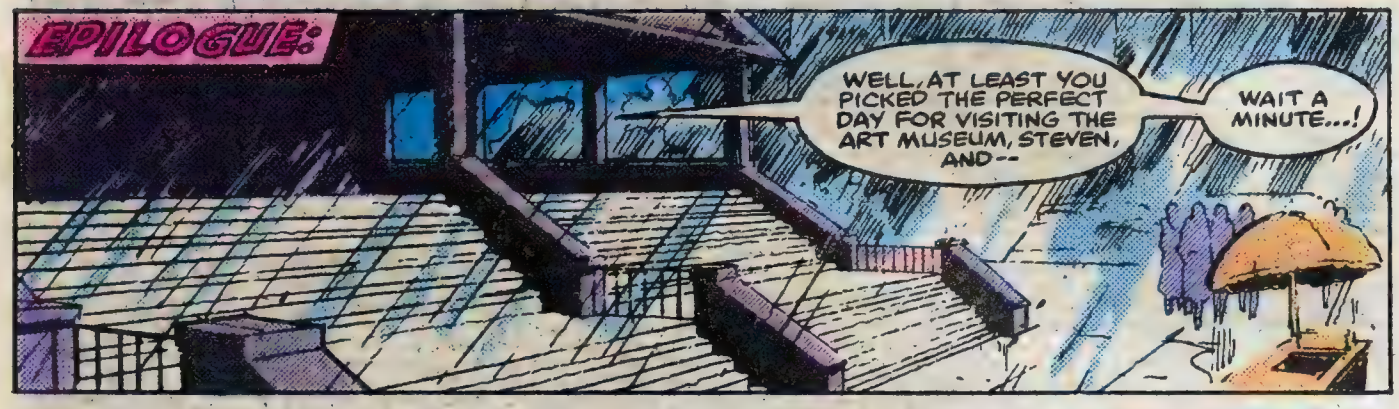
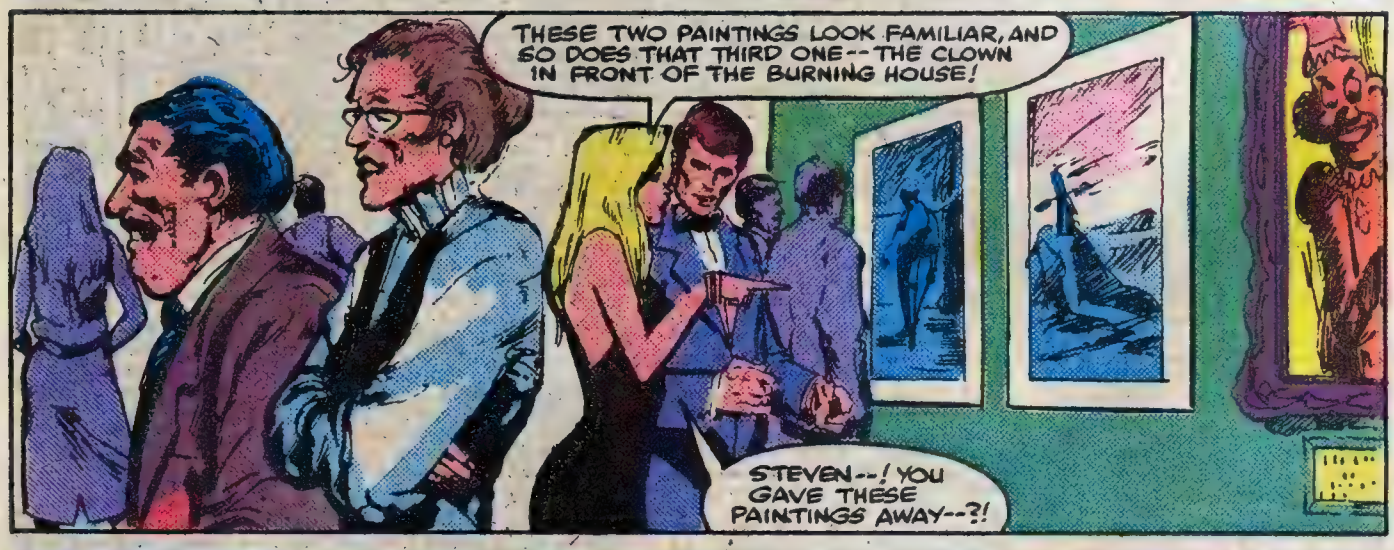
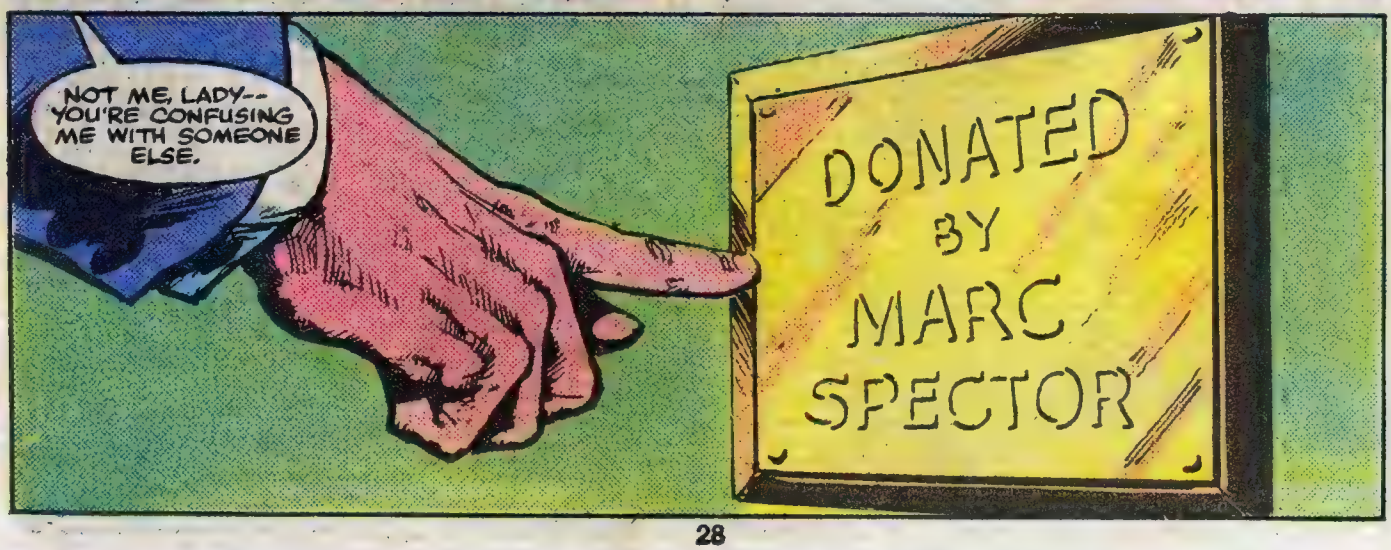
ANTON MOGART LUNGES, DAGGER HELD HIGH, FACE A SNARLING MASK...
BUT THE MOON KNIGHT FALLS BACK, CATCHING THE KNIFE-HAND, KNEEING UP AND BACK-- AND BOTH MEN CRASH OUT ONTO THE GABLED ROOFTOP.
DOWNSTAIRS, THE ANTIQUE GRANDFATHER CLOCK TICKS EVER CLOSER TO TO THE APPARENT TRUTH OF THE POLICE CHIEF'S VOW: "...MIDNIGHT AROUND HERE MEANS MURDER."
ONLY ONE QUESTION REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED: WHO WILL BE THE VICTIM...?
WHO WILL BE THE CAT, AND WHO THE MOUSE...?
A LAUGH OF DARK FATE THAT SUCH A QUESTION COULD BE DETERMINED--
--BY THE CHANCE SLIP OF A BOOTED HEEL ON A LOOSE SHARD OF GLASS...
NOW, MOON KNIGHT--NOW IT ENDS!
NOW YOU DIE!
AND YET, WITH SUPERB REFLEXES, THE MOON KNIGHT UNSNAPS HIS TRUNCHEON--
--PREPARED TO WARD OFF THE FATAL STAB...
HE WILL NEVER KNOW, HOWEVER, IF HE IS DESTINED TO SUCCEED.
SKREECH
INSTEAD, A LIGHTER FATE TAKES THE MATTER IN HAND...
BRAM
I WAS RIGHT-- IT'S MOGART!
UHN-H!
...AND THE QUESTION IS SETTLED IN A CRACK AND A FLASH.

MOGART! HANG ON--!!
C-CAN'T... SLIPPING ON THE GLASS... GOING TO--
"--FALL..."
PLASH
HIS OPERA CAPE-- IT RIPPED FREE!
I COULDN'T STOP HIM-- HE'S GONE!
THREE MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT...
HOW LONG CAN A WOUNDED MAN HOLD HIS BREATH?
THAT REALLY WASN'T NECESSARY, MARLENE-- I WOULD HAVE STOPPED HIM, BESIDES, I RATHER LIKED THE MAN...
HE WAS...REFRESHINGLY PSYCHOTIC.
AT LEAST YOU'RE ALIVE TO PASS JUDGMENT, STEVEN.
NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVE.
DON'T BE SO IMPATIENT, LADY-- I'M MERELY SELECTING MY FEE.
THIS ONE'LL DO. COME AND GET US, FRENCHIE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN-- YOUR FEE? AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT PICTURE OF A CLOWN IN FRONT OF A BURNING HOUSE?


IT'S A LONG STORY, MARLENE... HAVING A LOT TO DO WITH WALLS.


EPILOGUE:
WELL, AT LEAST YOU PICKED THE PERFECT DAY FOR VISITING THE ART MUSEUM, STEVEN, AND--
WAIT A MINUTE...!


THESE TWO PAINTINGS LOOK FAMILIAR, AND SO DOES THAT THIRD ONE--THE CLOWN IN FRONT OF THE BURNING HOUSE!
STEVEN--! YOU GAVE THESE PAINTINGS AWAY--?!


NOT ME, LADY-- YOU'RE CONFUSING ME WITH SOMEONE ELSE.
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RETURNING TO GRANT MANSION...
BUT WHY, STEVEN?
I LEARNED A LESSON FROM MOGART--COLLECTING DOES BAD THINGS TO THE BLOOD. BESIDES, THERE'S STILL TOO MUCH OF VAGABOND SPECTOR IN MY BLOOD, TOO LITTLE OF COLLECTOR GRANT.
MORE'S THE PITY. BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT BLANK SPOT ON THE WALL?
YOU MEAN THIS SPOT? I'M USING IT AS A BULLETIN BOARD--OR MEMO PAD. THEY DRAGGED THE RIVER AND NEVER FOUND HIS BODY, SO I'M USING HIS CAPE AS A REMINDER.
HE'LL BE BACK FOR IT SOME DAY--HE'S TOO MUCH THE COLLECTOR TO LET IT REMAIN AT LARGE.
I HAVE AN UNCANNY FEELING THAT YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT, STEVEN.
OH? NOW THERE'S A REFRESHING SWITCH--FOR ONCE YOU AGREE WITH ME.
BELIEVE ME, I HAVE LITTLE CHOICE. YOU SEE, MY GUN HAS ALWAYS FIRED A TRIFLE WIDE, AND WITH YOU AND MOGART STRUGGLING SO CLOSE TOGETHER, I COULDN'T TRUST IT WITH ANYTHING BUT--
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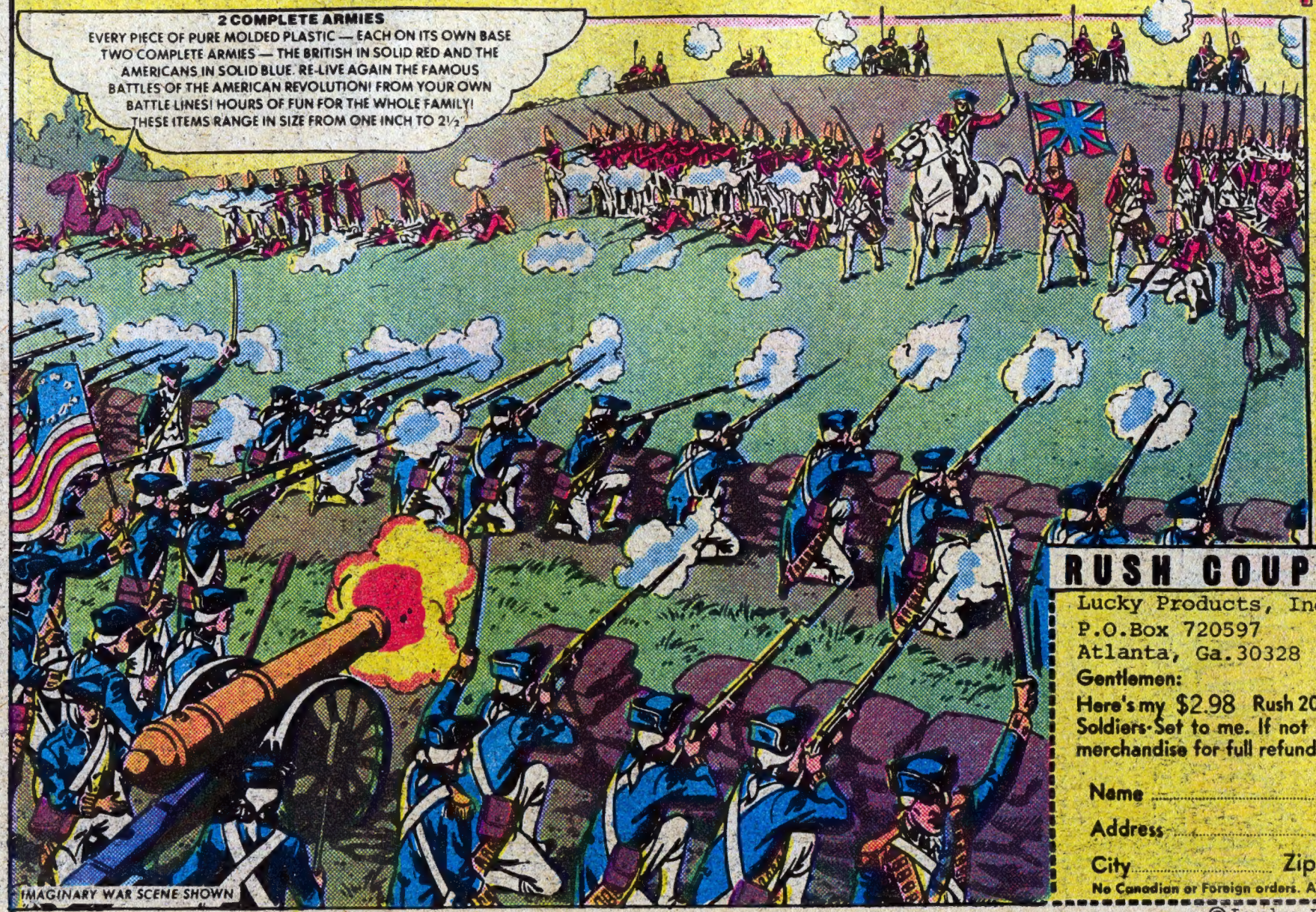

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